



CRISIS IN THE

CONGO

THE RISE AND FALL OF LAURENT KABILA

François Ngolet



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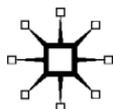
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François Ngolet

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For Tristane and Malina

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PREFACE

This book is a history of a critical period in Africa's first continental war, a history that was researched and written—but not finished—by François Ngolet. A brain tumor took him from us quite suddenly on April 11, 2005. One day, he seemed fine; the next day, he was in the hospital; three days later, he was gone.

François's death left everyone who knew him stunned and shattered. I and the rest of his colleagues in the College of Staten Island's history department staggered through the rest of the school year in a daze; I daresay the department has yet to fully recover from losing François. He was, in many ways, the heartbeat of the place. François joined the department in 1995, the first historian hired in twenty years, and in time became equal parts big brother and mentor to nearly all who came after him. He welcomed us, took us under his wing, pushed us to remain focused on our research, and ran interference—taking committee assignments so we would not have to—to protect us.

As anyone who knew him could report, François possessed a spectacular smile and a musical laugh; if you were his colleague, he made you happy to go to work; and if you were his student, you felt lucky to be in his classroom. In any setting, he could play equal parts comic, intellectual, and catalyst for lively discussion. We knew him as a kind of hallway pundit and philosopher, leading discussions on current events with National Public Radio blaring in the background. His students knew him as a passionate and engaging teacher, stalking back and forth in front of the classroom, slapping the board with his hand, and emerging from each class meeting as if from battle, his smart suit spattered in chalk dust. In the days and weeks after François's passing, the conversations in the department's corridors and stairwells had an amazing consistency: students mourned their favorite teacher, and colleagues marveled that so many of us thought of him as our closest friend.

For the entire time that I knew François, he had been working on this book. In the spring of 2005, he felt close enough to finishing the book that he paused to draft an introduction; sadly, just days before he went into hospital, his computer crashed, and he lost the introduction. And then it seemed, when we lost him so suddenly, that the book would not ever be completed.

As a result, this book is the product of François Ngolet's years of research and writing, but it is not, obviously, the same book he would have produced had he lived to complete it. We can only guess at how he might have finished it, revised it, and framed the whole thing for publication. Thanks to a host of people, however, we have the next best thing: a book that sprang almost entirely from François's capacious mind and then was cultivated, pruned, and brought to full flower through the loyalty of our publisher and the heroic efforts of two people: one of François's dearest friends and one of mine.

The manuscript that François left behind was long and largely unedited. The first several chapters (of a projected ten) were in pretty good shape, complete segments of a larger whole. The rest of the chapters were rougher, something between long compilations of notes and first drafts. And that introduction was gone altogether. Fortunately, that did not scare off Ella Pearce, the editor of Palgrave Macmillan's African Studies list. With some significant help, we thought we could pull the book together for publication. The critical first step came courtesy of Didier Gondola, François's friend and fellow Congo scholar who wrote the Introduction. The project might have died if Didier had not intervened at that crucial moment. In the meantime, the dean of Arts and Humanities at the College of Staten Island, Francisco Soto, came up with some money to pay a freelance editor to work on getting the manuscript into publishable shape. Ella and I agreed that the ideal editor to take on the job would be our mutual friend Brendan O'Malley, himself not long out of publishing and now a Ph.D. candidate in history at the City University of New York's Graduate Center. Brendan worked tirelessly, in the midst of juggling numerous other responsibilities, to get François's chapters into book form. It is not at all an overstatement to say that Brendan's name could easily grace this book's cover too. We simply would not have a finished book if not for his efforts which, over time, far, far outstripped his wages. It is a testament to his loyalty that this project did not ruin our friendship. Finally, when it turned out that our finished manuscript had come in over the projected word count, Didier again saved the project by whittling it down.

In addition to Didier and Brendan, a large community of people helped to see this project through to completion. Maybe most importantly, François's widow, Kim, has been steadfast in her commitment to getting François's work published. None at Palgrave, including several successive editors of the African history list—Ella Pearce, Luba Ostashevsky, and Chris Chappell—has ever wavered in their support for the project, and for all the right reasons. Michael Elf too made indispensable interventions at Palgrave, and right when we needed it. At the College of Staten Island, Provost David Podell and Dean Francisco Soto showed sensitivity and grace in quietly supporting this project and

urging it on. With David's and Francisco's help, François's colleagues in the Department of History at the College of Staten Island have named a seminar room in his honor and have long looked forward to the day when this book would be published. I am so happy that that day has come.

Finally, this book is dedicated to François's daughters, Tristane and Malina. My fondest memories of François are of our long conversations about our daughters. His love for his girls was boundless. And on more than one occasion he told me that although Tristane and Malina were growing up in the United States, he hoped they would come to know Gabon, to know Africa. I still picture him walking near his Lambaréné family home, holding his girls' hands, smiling in the equatorial sun. Tristane and Malina, your Dad wrote this book for you.

MICHAEL S. FOLEY
Sheffield, England

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INTRODUCTION

Ch. Didier Gondola

François Ngolet's sudden departure on April 11, 2005, has left a void among family members, friends, and colleagues. Ngolet was a family man, a father of two lovely daughters, Tristane and Malina. He was, for all his friends and colleagues, as passionate for intellectual pursuit as he was for his family's wellbeing. Ngolet was born in Lambaréné, Gabon, in 1961, at the maternity ward founded by none other than Dr. Albert Schweitzer, as part of a missionary hospital that the Alsatian physician, philosopher, and musician had established there in 1913. Ngolet, the iconoclast that he was, liked to quip about being delivered by Schweitzer, the epitome of the colonial civilizing mission and the "white man's burden," and growing up to become a passionate historian who often indicted colonization and its postcolonial avatar, globalization. After completing a B.A. in History at the University of Libreville, Gabon, he moved to Montpellier, France, where he completed his graduate studies and earned a Ph.D. in African history in 1994 at the Université Paul-Valéry.

His decision to specialize in the history of Gabon was not dictated by the autochthonous edge alone nor was it justified only by his familiarity with the land and the peoples of Gabon. Ngolet created a niche and filled a gap in a field long deserted by historians based outside of Gabon in favor of the ubiquitous West Africa or the Central African conundrum.¹ In fact, Gabon is so imperviously tucked between West Africa and Central Africa that it seems off the beaten tracks, a backwater territory explored only by rare audacious erudites such as French geographer Gilles Sautter, historian Jan Vansina and sociologist and anthropologist Georges Balandier.² Half the size of France and home to some of the most diverse ecosystems on the planet, Gabon had long mystified researchers with its low population density. With less than 1.5 million inhabitants, Gabon ranks 226th in the world in terms of population density, coming close to desertic countries such as Libya or Chad and sub-polar Canada or Iceland.

Following Sautter's majestic work, François Ngolet attempted to tease out this demographic anomaly. Unlike Sautter, who used broad brush strokes to depict the historical and social forces, from slavery to colonization,³ that colluded to ebb population growth in Equatorial Africa, Ngolet focused on the Bakele people of the Gabon Estuary.⁴ Using a multidisciplinary approach and his intimate knowledge of Bakele's oral tradition, Ngolet examined how internal as well as external factors militated against demographic gain along the Gabon Estuary.

After he moved to the United States, Ngolet's academic career as well as his personal life were profoundly impacted after he befriended Christopher Gray, another historian of Gabon who grew up in Massachusetts and was three years older than Ngolet. Ngolet and Gray, for those of us who saw them interact together, had so much in common: Gabon, of course, and their staunch third-world outlook and activism, but also their passion for life, their love of friendship, and the fact that they never took themselves too seriously. Together, they published one important article⁵ that explores the ways in which the timber industry in the Middle Ogooué area of Gabon thwarted the creation of a stable "labor market" that integrated the demand of the colonial wage-earning sector with the needs for the local economy. Gray and Ngolet first presented their findings at the *Africa's Urban Past* conference held at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London in June 1996. This was where I met them for the first time. I became instantly fond of them and could rarely think of one without thinking of the other. Gray and Ngolet were like identical twins, united in their love for life and the academic pursuit of the complexity of the land where Ngolet was born and that Gray had adopted. In October 2000, Gray died of cancer, leaving behind his Congolese wife Kisanga and his three children. He was forty-two. A rising star in his department at Florida International University, Gray actively participated in the development of several programs there. His book *Colonial Rule and Crisis in Equatorial Africa: Southern Gabon, ca. 1850–1940* was published posthumously by the University of Rochester Press with the assistance of many people, including his former adviser Phyllis Martin. Ngolet too departed at age forty-two. Like Gray, he left behind the fruit of many years of meticulous but unfinished research and writing that speaks volumes to his versatility.

Like most African Studies specialists, Ngolet was dismayed at the horrific events that unfolded in Rwanda in 1994 and climaxed in the worst genocide the African continent had ever experienced in its postcolonial years. With nearly 1 million victims, clubbed or hacked to death by machetes within less than 100 days, the Rwandan genocide stands out in the postwar era as an aberration, not only for the apathetic posture adopted by the international community but also for the mass indoctrination and mass participation that spurred individuals and groups into

butchering their own neighbors and even their own relatives, because of either their ethnicity (Tutsi) or their political views (moderate Hutu). For all of these reasons, scholars, activists, victims, as well as perpetrators have contributed to the enormous corpus of memoirs, studies, and fictional works about the Rwandan genocide, in Kinyarwanda, French, and English. The Rwandan genocide served also as a trigger that unleashed a catastrophe of such magnitude that it came to be known as Africa's first continental war, a conflict that continues to wreak havoc in the heart of Africa.

Even though the Rwandan crisis has elicited a considerable number of books, only a few of them have attempted to link the turmoil in neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) with patterns of retaliatory violence that surfaced in the Great Lakes region in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide.⁶ The Tutsi-led Rwandan government in Kigali has so deftly tapped into the West's sense of guilt⁷ that the international community continues to look the other way and to silence the "other genocide," the plight of the Congolese people.⁸ By all accounts, the current war in the eastern Congo, considered to be the bloodiest conflict since World War II (with a toll of nearly 6 million lives since 1997), has received scant coverage from the international media compared to Rwanda or Darfur. It also has not led to the kind of public outcry and mobilization that is commensurate with the magnitude of human and ecological loss. Admittedly, Congo's tragedy has been fueled by transnational corporations' insatiable greed for its abundant mineral ore deposits, including coltan,⁹ and not by ethnic conflicts that existed in the region from time immemorial.

Africa's first continental war has led not only to a scramble for Congo's minerals. It is deeply connected to territorial claims that are rooted in the absurdity of colonial boundaries. With an area larger than Western Europe, the Congo has long been held together, albeit with an iron fist, under Mobutu's three-decade long dictatorship. Indeed, the Congo so dwarfed its neighbors in terms of both its resources and its sheer size that the demise of Mobutu and the civil strife that ensued aroused deep-seated convictions within the Great Lakes region that the Congo or at least some tracts of its territories were up for the taking.¹⁰ This thinking was largely promoted by foregone conclusions in Washington that the Congo was too big to be effectively governed and that only by balkanizing its territory could it survive the post-Mobutu chaos. In 1997, after thirty-two years in power, an ailing Mobutu was overthrown by a ragtag movement known as *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre* (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire—ADFL). The ADFL was initially backed by the new Tutsi-led Rwandan government and was led by a longtime yet obscure political foe of Mobutu's regime. Few in the Congo had heard of Laurent-Désiré

Kabila until he assumed the leadership of the ADFL and agreed to be the instrument of Kigali's territorial ambitions in the eastern Congo. However, this coalition of fortune was doomed to fail because it had to accommodate too many constituencies: its Rwandan backers, Congo's political opposition to Mobutu's rule, and its own military factions that ran the entire gamut from *Mai Mai* fighters (local militias) to Tutsi troops to child soldiers known as *Kadogo*. Its own ethnic cleavages, between Baluba of the Katanga region (Balubakat) and Congolese ethnic Tutsis (Banyamulenge) ended up undermining the tenuous equilibrium within the movement even before ADFL troops made their triumphant entrance into Kinshasa after a grueling seven-month trek from the eastern border where the rebellion had originally gathered steam. Moreover, Kabila's inability to shed his cold war Marxist worldview alienated the support of Western governments and investors and made him vulnerable to attacks from the armed opposition.

François Ngolet's book chronicles the making of this regional conflict, from the collapse of the ADFL coalition to the rise of Joseph Kabila, following Laurent Kabila's assassination on January 16, 2001. More than a simple chronicle, the book follows the established genre of *histoire immédiate* (immediate history) that has shaped the historiography of the Congo since the first studies documenting what Colin Legum has called the "Congo Disaster." In the early 1960s, as the Congo started its topsyturvy descent into the doldrums of civil chaos and became a cold war battleground, the CRISP (Centre de Recherche et d'Information Socio-Politiques) published a series of volumes, *les dossiers du CRISP*, that attempted to salvage contemporary documents, which CRISP scholars lamented could be lost for future generations, in order to "further the historical consciousness of the populations involved and to be 'useable' for actions in the near future."¹¹

Only by intersecting both historical narratives and policy analyses did *histoire immédiate* acquire a solid foothold within the field of African Studies. Initially shaped by the cold war context and the Marxist approach of its promoters, notably Belgian historian and political scientist Benoît Verhaegen, *histoire immédiate* was apparently so untrammelled with *histoire engagée* that the two were essentially indistinguishable. More recently, Bogumil Jewsiewicki and a team of Congolese scholars have steered *histoire immédiate* in a direction that deliberately blurs the disciplinary boundaries between history and other related disciplines such as sociology and political science. Their narratives no longer revolve around historical processes as such but shed light on the way historical events are negotiated and reconstructed by individuals and communities. Hence, they give a prominent role to oral and local sources in a way that mirrors Pierre Nora's notion of *lieux de mémoire*.

Ngolet's book follows in this tradition of *histoire immédiate*.¹² Part One of the book discusses the short-lived alliance created by Laurent Kabila and its collapse as a result of internal ethnic tensions within the ADFL, military defeats, and the refugee crisis. Failure to implement the road map called for by the Lusaka Peace Agreement (signed on July 12, 1999) led to an impasse that eventually eroded Kabila's power and alienated some of his international backers. Part Two looks at Kabila's failure not just in terms of his inability to abide by the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and thwart rebellious patterns that mired the post-Mobutu era. Ngolet looks also at the cycle of retaliatory violence that turned victims into perpetrators and links ethnic tensions to broader patterns of international interventionism motivated by the scramble for Congo's wealth. This was the case in the Kisangani episode when two splintered rebel factions of the original RCD (Congolese Rally for Democracy), backed by Rwanda and Uganda respectively, battled out for the control of Congo's fifth largest city and its lucrative diamond trade. Finally, Part Three focuses on the tumultuous transition that put Joseph Kabila in power following his father's assassination on January 16, 2001. Ngolet argues that Joseph Kabila's power hinged on his willingness to revive the peace process rather than on breaking the military stalemate. Winning the peace rather than the war has indeed been critical in buoying Joseph Kabila's power as he faced challenges to legitimize his presidency. François Ngolet's book is likely to become a useful source for scholars who endeavor to tease out the events and developments that led to Africa's first continental war.



Map of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Washington, D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, 1998. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.

PART I

Collapse of the ADFL Alliance

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Origins of the Rebellion against Kabila

On May 17, 1997, when Laurent-Désiré Kabila's forces brought the thirty-two-year rule of Mobutu Sese Seko to an end, it marked a moment of high hopes for the Congolese people. This powershift was expected to end the corruption and economic mismanagement that had become synonymous with Mobutu's rule. But the Congolese people and the international community were quickly disappointed by Kabila's lack of political skills.¹ His handling of the investigation surrounding the massacre of the Hutu refugees, his refusal to introduce democratic reforms, his political marginalization of his Tutsi allies, and his failure to diffuse ethnic tensions in the two Kivu provinces that border Rwanda caused war to reignite in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

PROBLEMS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

The origins of the rebellion against Kabila's regime could be traced back to the march of the *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre* (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire or ADFL) across the vast expanse of the country, an area comparable in size to Western Europe. Indeed, rumors were circulating that soldiers of this organization—mainly Banyamulenge² and Rwandan Tutsis—were systematically killing Hutu refugees who fled west after the destruction of the camps in the east.³ The ultimate objective of the ADFL attacks on the camps was to force Hutu refugees to return to Rwanda, and thousands of them did. But this strategy employed by the ADFL and the allied Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF)⁴ forces in the country did not work as planned, because thousands of refugees trekked west across the Congolese rain forest.⁵ Marie Beatrice Umutesi, who was among them, gives us a poignant account of the fate of these refugees in her book *Fuir ou Mourir au Zaïre*.⁶ According to Umutesi, many factors played a role in pushing thousands of Hutus to travel west rather than returning to

Rwanda. Many of the refugees were Interahamwe militia (Hutu paramilitary forces) and ex-*Forces armées rwandaises* (Armed Forces of Rwanda, commonly referred to as FAR) who carried out the genocide against the Tutsis in 1994. Their return to Rwanda would have exposed them to certain death or prison at the hands of the RPF regime in Kigali. Other refugees (particularly those of South Kivu) could not cross into Rwanda when the camps were attacked, because the Zaire/Rwanda border was closed by the RPF. Other refugees had never taken part in the genocide but didn't feel secure enough to return to Rwanda because of their deep resentment of the Tutsi regime. The attacks on the camps were only the first wave of death among the refugees. The death toll continued to grow through exhaustion, hunger, malnutrition, and disease. When captured by the ADFL soldiers, refugees were systematically shot, sometimes finished off with knives. The "trail of death," which began in the camps in the Kivus, stretched all the way west to Mbandaka, the capital of the Equateur province on the Zaire River border with the Republic of Congo. Along the way, the massacres of Tingi-Tingi, Kisangani, and Mbandaka were so horrific that they helped mobilize the international community.

This dramatic fate of the Hutu refugees wandering in the Congolese territory became an important issue in the clashes between the United Nations (UN) and the Kabila government. At the beginning of the ADFL offensive, fragments of information about the massacre of Hutu refugees and local Zairian populations began to emerge. The UN representative on Human Rights, the Chilean Roberto Garreton, published a report in which he accused rebel forces of separating out men to be killed and sending women and children off to Rwanda to meet an uncertain fate. During the attack of the refugee camps of Kaberezi on October 21, 1996, Burundian refugees were massacred. The report states that at the beginning of November, 2,754 people were killed, the majority being foreign refugees (probably Hutu). On November 18, 500 people, including a priest, were assassinated in the refugee camp of Chimanga. According to Garreton, mutilations, torture, cruel treatment, and many other human rights violations were routinely committed by ADFL troops.⁷ Furthermore, he noted that in Uvira and other territories conquered by the Banyamulenge, ADFL forces attacked refugees camps, killing and displacing numerous people. Garreton charged that these forces committed grave human rights violations by forcefully expelling the refugees to their country of origin, knowing full well that as Hutus they would face persecution and even death.⁸ Garreton's early and aggressive denunciation of human rights violation complicated relations between the UN commission and the DRC government. Many roadblocks were erected by Kabila's regime to prevent the UN team from carrying out its task. The Congolese government rejected the team's

conclusions, creating more difficulties for another UN commission that arrived on April 15, 1997. This mission of investigation was composed of three members: the Senegalese Bacre Waly N'diaye (in charge of arbitrary executions), the Ghanaian Jonas Foli (for missing persons), and Garreton himself. The team also had five additional experts. Pressure was put on the ADFL by the UN Security Council to cooperate with this mission. Nonetheless, the new UN initiative faced several obstacles. In May 1997, Kabila developed a strategy of evasion and obstruction to prevent the investigation from moving forward. On July 3, the reconstruction minister, Etienne Mbaya, directly challenged the presence of Garreton on the team. Mbaya also wanted the UN investigation to cover the whole period between March 1993 and May 1997, extending the investigation to the massacres committed during the Mobutu era in order to include the killing of the Tutsis during the “democratic transition.”⁹ The UN buckled under the pressure of the DRC government. Kofi Annan announced that he would send a new team headed by Atsu-Koffi Amega, the former president of the Supreme Court of Togo, and agreed to include an investigation of atrocities committed since March 1993. Kabila then decided to confine the investigation to the east alone, while Kofi Annan insisted that the investigation cover the whole DRC territory, citing the need to examine all areas where there had been massive concentrations of refugees. On September 16, 1997, Etienne Mbaya, minister of reconstruction and emergency public works, countered by refusing to authorize the mission to conduct investigations in Mbandaka, an important massacre site in the far west. Mbaya made matters worse for the UN team when he introduced the demand that the UN fund a parallel Congolese investigation team with a \$ 1.7 million payment to the Congolese government. Thus the UN was forced to withdraw its team from the DRC, recalling Koffi Amega to New York City on October 3, 1997. At the same time, UN agencies and NGOs in charge of humanitarian affairs were expelled from Goma, the capital of the North Kivu province.

On October 16, the UN secretary general stated that if the Congolese government did not accept a new human rights investigation team, international aid to the DRC would be stopped. Kabila responded by accusing international organizations and regional forces of waging a war against the DRC. Yet the UN ultimatum proved effective; Kabila agreed to receive another human rights mission on October 25, 1997. The mission was to visit the sites where atrocities were suspected of having been committed. But one concession was made to Kabila: once again it was agreed that the UN mission would extend the investigation to atrocities committed since March 1993. The DRC government also attempted to impose a rigid deadline, dictating that the work of the team be completed by February 28, 1998, but Bill Richardson, the U.S. ambassador to the UN, managed to soften this

demand. But when the UN team led by Koffi Amega effectively began its work on November 11, 1997, the Kabila regime found other ways to stall. DRC officials refused to name a representative to the mission to Mbandaka, thereby postponing it. International organizations grew frustrated with the Kabila regime. On December 3, 1997, when the Friends of the Congo Conference (*Conférence des Amis du Congo*) sponsored by the World Bank (WB) opened in Brussels, Human Rights Watch and the International Federation of Human Rights pressured donors to link financial aid to the Congo with human rights progress. The UN team finally departed for Mbandaka on December 10 but encountered a group of protesters, most likely organized by the government. The same situation occurred when the team reached the site of Wendji, fifteen miles from Mbandaka. Local elders alleged that the site was a secret religious shrine and prevented investigators from entering it. The elders were later willing to allow the investigation to proceed if money was given to them. Because of security concerns, the UN was forced to evacuate its team from Mbandaka on the December 14. Despite these difficulties, the team managed to conduct some interviews in Mbandaka.¹⁰ Interviewees were later arrested and imprisoned by the police. The work of the UN team was so deeply hampered that Kofi Annan was forced to withdraw the mission team definitively on April 17, 1998. The final report, which was presented to the UN secretary general, stated that all the deliberately created harassments and obstacles prevented the UN mission from pursuing its mandate. It is fair to conclude that the DRC government never had any intention of accepting the secretary general's mission of investigation. It faked acceptance to create the illusion of cooperation.¹¹

The refugee problem had tarnished Kabila's regime from the very start. It was widely used by Kabila's detractors to discredit his rule.¹² This situation was aggravated by Kabila's unwillingness to continue to implement democratic reforms despite pressure from the international community.¹³ On March 22, 1997, Kabila announced in Kisangani that all political parties were forbidden until the end of the "war of liberation." He also declared that the Alliance would form a "transition government" that would stay in power for one year. This government would include only those people who never worked with Mobutu's regime, which automatically excluded Étienne Tshisekedi, the leader of the foremost opposition party, the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS).¹⁴ In taking control of the state, the ADFL would bring into power only those individuals who had no ties to the old order.¹⁵ For example, the *Front Patriotique*, a radical-left party untainted by association with Mobutu and led by the lawyer Kinkela Vinkansi and former director of the Kinshasa Hospital Dr. Jean-Baptiste Sondji, joined the ADFL; Sondji became minister of health and Vinkansi became minister

of posts and telecommunications. Kabila utilized this distinction among UDPS members vis-à-vis the new situation to great political advantage. Longtime UDPS members who entered his government included Omer N’Kamba, who became a provincial governor, and Justine M’poyo Kasavubu, appointed minister for the public service. Joseph Olenghankoy, a leader of the Forces for Renovation for Union and Solidarity (FONUS), a political formation close to the UDPS, also called for a dialogue with the new authorities. As one of the most radical opponents to Mobutu, he actively prepared the ADFL troops’ entry into Kinshasa. This co-optation tactic was also pursued with the *Parti Lumumbiste Unifié* (PALU), which, despite its radical stand, also maintained a degree of dialogue with the new regime. François Lumumba, Patrice Lumumba’s son, eventually attempted to transform the Alliance into a full-fledged Lumumbist party, but he failed. Individual Lumumbists, such as Anicet Kashamura, *Mulopwe* (Emperor) Kalondji, and Emmanuel Dungia, ended up joining the ADFL. Kabila also reached out to businessmen such as Cyprien Rwakabula Shinga, an important business and political leader of North Kivu.¹⁶ Business magnate Jeannot Bemba Saolona—who helped finance the ADFL war effort to protect his interests in North Kivu—called for negotiations with the Alliance. In the southernmost province of Katanga, political figures such as Nguz a Karl I Bond and the governor Kyangu wa Kumwanza also succumbed to the ADFL appeals. The Catholic Church was divided, because Msgr. Christophe Munzehirwa, archbishop of Bukavu, was murdered for speaking up against the Rwando-Ugandan invasion and in favor of Hutu refugees, but Msgr. Jérôme Gapangwa, bishop of Uvira, was sympathetic to the Tutsi cause and the ADFL. It seemed as if only journalists, NGO officials, human rights activists, and those who remained in the UDPS resisted Kabila’s co-optation tactics. Indeed, NGOs who were engaged in the democratic transition clashed with the Alliance when Kabila decided to suspend the democratization process. In response, Minister of Reconstruction Etienne Richard Mbaya created a national commission to “coordinate actions of the NGOs” in order to better control them.

Generally speaking, Kabila sought to undercut the credibility of the internal opposition, accusing it of having accepted Mobutu as head of state during the transition period. After achieving power, the suspension of political activities of opposition parties was prolonged for two years. Kabila’s government justified this act by stating that there could be no opposition to the Alliance because the ADFL was not a party, but a movement opened to all Congolese. According to Minister of Interior Mwenze Kongolo, private and public demonstrations by opposition parties were declared illegal. But the new regime announced that it would respect the freedom of expression (*liberté d’opinion*), allowing newspapers to openly criticize the authorities. Several newspapers did not hesitate

to denounce corruption and human rights abuses but soon discovered that *liberte d'opinion* had its limits. The sharpest critics were arrested; for example, journalist Baudoin Kamanda wa Kamanda of the Radio Télévision Nationale (RTNC) was arrested by the *Police d'Intervention Rapide* for attending a press conference given by the opposition leader Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma.¹⁷ Kabila's regime soon took control of the RTNC, turning it into a propaganda machine aimed at creating a personality cult, even broadcasting songs praising Kabila. The former radical opposition continued to protest, demanding political pluralism, but these demonstrations were violently dispersed. On July 25, 1997, the military even opened fire on a demonstration organized by the PALU and UDPS youth, killing at least one person. On August 15, 1997, UDPS protesters were arrested and tortured. The UDPS rejected ADFL power and attempted to reclaim the institutions put forward by the *Conférence Nationale Souveraine* (CNS), a democratizing body instituted under Mobutu, suggesting that they be used as a basis for a new government of national unity. It was in this atmosphere that Etienne Tshisekedi and Joseph Olenghankoy were briefly arrested and released. Demonstrations by the PALU were also brutally repressed, and the police even occupied their leader Antoine Gizenga's home, which also served as the party's headquarter. Important Lumumbists leaders, such as Christophe Gbenye and Gaston Soumialot, were not included in the government. Kabila's relations with Lumumba's family were very complex, despite the inclusion of Juliana Lumumba (Lumumba's daughter) in the ADFL government. When Kabila organized the thirty-seventh anniversary commemoration of Lumumba's death at the *Palais du Peuple*, none of Lumumba's family members attended the festivities.

In order for "re-democratization" to take place, a Constitutional Commission headed by Anicet Kashamura, a native of Idjwi Island in South Kivu, was established. Old Lumumbist politicians, members of the internal opposition, jurists, and prominent members of the new regime comprised the commission. When the constitutional decree was promulgated in May 28, 1998, Kashamura published a list of people to be excluded from political life. This list of 180 names included people suspected of corruption, political assassination, and human rights violations. Surprisingly, even names of Kabila's friends from the 1960s rebellion against Mobutu, such as Antoine Gizenga and Gaston Soumialot, were on the list (perhaps in an attempt to silence true Lumumbists). Early in 1998, the *Voix des sans Voix* (a human rights organization) published a list of political prisoners with pictures. Among them there were opposition activist Pastor Theodore Ngoy, leading UDPS member Professor Matthieu Ka Bila Kalele, and opposition leader Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma. Appearing as well was a broad spectrum of political and media figures: journalist Modeste Mutinga, publisher of the independent *Le Potentiel*;

former Mobutu minister Eugène Diomi; and leaders of the radical opposition to Mobutu. Olenghankoy and Tshisekedi were arrested on Kinshasa in February 12, 1998. Tshisekedi was held under house arrest in his village in the Kasai province. Upon his arrest, Olenghankoy was transferred to the prison of Bulowo in Katanga.¹⁸ Z'Ahidi Ngoma and Olenghankoy later encountered Masasu Nindaga, Kabila's former commander of DRC forces who was arrested in November 1997 on suspicion of a coup plot and detained in the same prison. The three men escaped on April 12, 1998. They were recaptured and sentenced to the following prison terms: twenty years for Masasu, fifteen years for Olenghankoy, and twelve months for Z'Ahidi Ngoma, who was sentenced in absentia: on account of pressure from the international community, he was allowed to leave the country. Kabila would come to regret this outcome since Z'Ahidi Ngoma would later become one of the leaders of the August 1998 rebellion. Prominent human rights organizations, such as the *Association de défense des droits de l'Homme de Congo-Kinshasa* (founded in 1991 and known by its older acronym, AZADHO), were also repressed, forcing many officials to leave the country.¹⁹

The business community too grew disillusioned with Kabila's performance.²⁰ The ADFL established early contacts with major corporations with business in the DRC; some North American corporations went as far as to provide Kabila with aircraft and financial support for the war effort, most often in exchange for mining contracts. One significant contract was signed with America Mineral Fields International (AMFI) of Hope, Arkansas. The Barrick Gold Corporation, a Canadian mining concern, also contributed a direct payment of \$50 million in May 1997 and promised future financial assistance. Kabila courted a network of 80 Canadian mining companies that were interested in investing heavily in African countries.²¹ In addition, the American Diamond Buyers and De Beers had important financial dealings with the new regime. Some of these companies even helped locate mercenaries for Kabila's army.²² One such mercenary was Belgian Willy Mallants, who became Kabila's military adviser and also represented AMFI's interests in Belgium. After the war, Kabila played these companies off each other for more payoffs, leading to tensions between the AMFI and the Anglo-American Corporation, a major gold-mining concern.

Another indication of international concern over Kabila's rule occurred during the aforementioned Friends of the Congo Conference organized by the WB.²³ The objective of this conference was to put in place a program of economic and social reconstruction for the DRC. The country's financial needs were estimated to be \$1.293 billion. The DRC proposed to provide \$ 565 million by itself, while the remaining \$ 728 million would be covered by international donors from the Friends of the Congo group. When the conference began on December 4, 1997, the WB stated

that one of the primary conditions for the DRC's recovery would be the application of "good governance."²⁴ The conference did not meet its financial expectations since donors made no major commitments. Only the European Economic Community (EEC) proposed to offer 100 million euros for health care and road reparations. The participants promised to create a "Trust Fund," to which donor countries would eventually transfer contributions. Sweden and Belgium promised to pay for the printing of the new currency, and the United States proposed to give only \$10 million to the Trust Fund. The WB could not provide funds, because the DRC owed more than \$300 million to the WB and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) since the departure of Kengo wa Dondo from office in April 1997. By May 1998, the Trust Fund had gathered only \$32 million, a great disappointment.

Internationally, hostility toward Kabila was openly expressed through diplomatic channels. Indeed, Belgian authorities had an overwhelmingly negative perception of Kabila after he seized power in May 1997. The Belgium minister of foreign affairs, Erik Derycke, cited instability, political incoherence, and the outburst of extreme nationalist agitation as factors preventing the Belgian government from developing bilateral relations with the DRC.²⁵ Belgian Cooperation state secretary Reginald Moreels even accused the ADFL of having perpetuated genocide in the east. In turn, the DRC chief of staff of the minister of information came on state television and accused Belgium of being a "terrorist state." This accusation was allegedly due to the discovery of weapons at the Belgian Consulate in Lubumbashi. This accusation was vehemently denied by the Belgian Foreign Affairs Office. Despite some effort by Francophone politicians to reengage with Belgium in the DRC, relations between the two countries worsened.

The U.S. perception of the Kabila regime was negative as well.²⁶ Kabila's revolutionary past never appealed to the Americans. The rebels' abduction of three Americans in North Katanga in 1984 was another decisive factor in shaping the American view of Kabila. The United States nonetheless backed the ADFL up until its victory on May 17, 1997,²⁷ and also continued to actively engage the DRC in encouraging the new leaders to make rational decisions.²⁸ But the United States remained reluctant to allocate substantial aid to the DRC. The Clinton White House and the State Department frequently criticized Kabila for violating human rights. The United States pressured Kabila to free political prisoners and authorize the activities of oppositional political parties. The deterioration of relations between the United States and the DRC reached its climax in February 1998 when Clinton's emissary, Jesse Jackson, was snubbed by the Kabila regime in Kinshasa for meeting with opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi. Tensions between the two countries peaked in March 1998 during Clinton's Africa tour. He carefully avoided visiting

Kinshasa but met with Kabila in Uganda for just fifteen minutes. During that brief meeting, Clinton admonished Kabila to respect human rights and political freedom.

In conclusion, the massacre of the Hutu refugees, suppression of democratic reforms, and international pressures created a climate of discontent and opposition toward the Kabila regime. Kabila's problems with the business community, as well as diplomatic tensions with countries such as the the Untied States and Belgium, prevented Kabila from distinguishing himself as a preferable alternative to Mobutu. This negative perception of Kabila planted the seeds for a future rebellion, while the power struggle between the Lubakat²⁹ and Tutsi ethnic groups provided fertile soil for those seeds to grow.

BALUBAKAT AND TUTSI POWER STRUGGLE

Indeed, the coming rebellion proved a turning point in the recent history of the DRC because it pitted two former allied groups against one another.³⁰ When on October 18, 1996, the ADFL was created in Lemera region within the South Kivu province, the Tutsi-Banyamulenge dominated the organization. With the assistance of the Rwandan army, the Tutsis became the initiators of a rebellion that resulted in the overthrow of the Mobutu regime.³¹ A suspicion lingered that when the Lemera Protocol forming the ADFL was signed a secret document accompanied the main text. In this document, the Tutsis were guaranteed not only Congolese citizenship but also full control of a territory in the Kivus.³² Four political parties formed the ADFL: the *Conseil National de la Résistance* (CNR) of André Kissasse Ngandu, a Tetela who participated in the 1960s rebellions;³³ the *Alliance Démocratique des Peuples* (ADP) led by Deogratias Bugera and which represented Tutsi interests; the *Parti de la Révolution Populaire* (PRP) led by Kabila himself;³⁴ and the *Movement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Zaïre* (MRLZ) led by Anselme Masasu Ningada, whose mother was a Rwandan Tutsi and his father a Mushi of Congo/Zaire. So, with two parties heavily supported by Rwanda and Uganda, the Tutsis' domination of the ADFL was almost complete. During the occupation of Bukavu, Goma, and a large part of eastern Congo, the Banyamulenge continued to dominate the Alliance.³⁵ But, this situation changed slightly in February 1997 when the first contingent of 800 ex-Gendarmes Katangais (soldiers descended from those who fought for Katanga's secession shortly after Congolese independence) arrived in Bukavu to reinforce the ADFL forces. Renamed *Les Tigres* (the Tigers), they were led by Delphin Muland, whose deputy, Vindicien Kiyana, served as leader when the Gendarmes staged an insurrection against Mobutu's authority in the mining town of Kolwezi in 1978. The arrival of the Gendarmes did not

change the military leadership of the ADFL at first, but it nonetheless shifted the power balance in the long run.³⁶

In addition to the four founders, some other important figures of the ADFL were Moise Nyarugabo, a Banyamulenge who was chief of staff to the president of the Alliance; the Burundian Isaac Karadinyembwe, whose mother was remarried to a Kasaïen and who served as Kabila's political adviser; and Aubert Mukendi Kizito, a Luba from Kasai and an important ADFL supporter who became Kabila's chief of staff after the ADFL victory.³⁷ Other significant figures in the movement included John Ilunga, who headed the ADFL secret services in Goma, and Justin Molewa, the PRP member responsible for ideological propaganda. Tutsi power clearly manifested itself in the "liberated zones" (those conquered by the ADFL) when co-optation became the main method by which leaders were chosen. The Banyamulenge generally appointed themselves to the most important positions.³⁸ This tactic was so prevalent that even Masasu Nindaga denounced it. The Tutsi hegemony was not well received by the rest of the Zairians. They felt humiliated and frequently accused the Tutsi of a triumphalist and arrogant attitude.³⁹ Although Kabila was Luba himself, most saw his ascendancy to the presidency of the DRC after the fall of Kinshasa on May 17, 1997, as an affirmation of the Tutsi-dominated ADFL. The presence of such leaders as Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Pasteur Bizimungu of Rwanda, and Pierre Buyoya of Burundi at Kabila's inauguration ceremony made the Tutsi influence absolutely clear.⁴⁰ Tutsi domination was felt regularly in the daily operations of Kabila's office. For example, Chief of Staff Aubert Mukendi (an ethnic Luba)⁴¹ was frequently undermined by a more powerful figure: Moise Nyarugabo, Kabila's private secretary. Sometimes, Mukendi's decisions were forcefully opposed by the Banyamulenge or Rwandan Tutsis of the president's staff.⁴² Mukendi was eventually dismissed and replaced by Abdoulaye Yerodia Ndombasi of the Bas-Congo province. Kabila's close security guards were Banyamulenge, Rwandan Tutsis, and Angolans. One of Kabila's secretaries was a Banyamulenge Tutsi, and the other, Nelly Tambwe, was a Lubakat. Several Tutsis also occupied top finance positions, with Michel Rudatenguha as Kabila's financial adviser and Alfred Kalisa as head of the *Banque du Commerce et de Développement* (BCD). It was this bank that collected the funds given to the ADFL by the international corporations seeking favors. Overall, between October 1996 and January 1998 the Tutsi presence on Kabila's staff was overwhelming.

Only with the "Liberation of Lumbumbashi"⁴³ and the nomination of Gaetan Kakudji as governor of Katanga did the Lubakat began playing a role in the ADFL.⁴⁴ Nonetheless, the rise of the Lubakat in important sectors of state power did not lessen the anti-Tutsi feeling, which was growing across the DRC. Kabila was accused by the rest of the Congolese of being a puppet of the Tutsis and foreigners. In Bukavu, where the

anti-Tutsi sentiment was particularly virulent, Kabila was forced to publicly defend the Banyamulenge on February 28, 1997.⁴⁵

The Tutsi-Katangan power struggle was concentrated not solely among the staff of the presidency; it was extended into the government itself. Indeed, the first government formed by Kabila in July 1, 1997 had a large number of ministers of varying ethnic backgrounds from the Congolese diaspora, but there was nonetheless the overwhelming presence of Katangans at the ministerial level. They had not only the presidency and the Ministry of Defense (both controlled by Kabila) but also three more ministries including the Ministry of the Interior. Although Tutsi presence in the government was not predominant, the ADFL was firmly in control despite the presence of ministers of other political parties.

The armed forces and other security services were also affected by the Tutsi-Lubakat power struggle. The chief of staff of the *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo* (commonly known as the FAC) was James Kabarebe, a Tutsi from Rwanda. His deputy was Joseph Kabila, the president's son who had received military training in China. In Joseph Kabila's sphere there was John Numbi, a Lubakat, and François Olinga, son of Nicolas Olinga (a general of the Simba, a rebel group of the 1960s).⁴⁶ The National Police (NP) was led by Celestin Kifwa, a Hamba⁴⁷ from Katanga, while an important branch of the National Police, the *Police d'Intervention Rapide* (PIR) was dominated by people from the Bandundu region. The *Agence Nationale de Renseignement* (ANR), the government's intelligence agency, was led had Paul Kabongo, a Muluba from Kasai, who was later replaced by Clement Kibinda, a Songye from Kasai. Kibinda was then replaced by Severin Kabwe, a Lubakat who came to this post after being injured by Banyamulenge soldiers celebrating the anniversary of the fall of Goma on October 19, 1997.⁴⁸

The FAC had two branches: one in charge of interior security led by Kasereka Kibatonbwe, a Nande from North Kivu,⁴⁹ and the other overseeing exterior security. The latter was headed by Colonel Moleka, a Lubakat and relative of Kabila. The *Détection Militaire des Activités Antipatrie* (DEMIAP), a military intelligence service, was headed by General Sikatenda, a Bembe of South Kivu.⁵⁰ In addition, Kabila had a special presidential security force, the *Groupe Spécial de Sécurité Présidentielle* (GSSP), led by the Lubakat Ango Ango, son of National Police head Celestin Kifwa. The GSSP was composed of 6,000 troops, all Balubakat.⁵¹ Salaries became another source of contention between the Tutsis and other factions within the FAC. Each of the Tutsis and foreign troop members regularly received \$100 a month, while other troop members usually received \$10 a month and even that was, to make matters worse, on an irregular basis. The ex-members of the *Forces Armées Zaïroises* (or FAZ, the regular army under Mobutu) were left in their

reeducation camps in Kitona (Bas-Congo), while 4,000 ex-Mayi-Mayi and Kadogo were regrouped in the Kapalata camp, near Kisangani, decimated by a cholera epidemic.

These tensions resulted in tremendous resentment of the Tutsis by the Tigers and other members of the FAC. Violent confrontations occurred in August 1997 between the Tigers and the Tutsis of the military police in Lubumbashi. Similar skirmishes between “reeducated” ex-FAZ and Rwandan troops erupted in Camp CETA in Kinshasa. On November 28, 1997, a shootout took place between the two factions in Kinshasa and ten people were killed. This battle was a revolt of Tutsi soldiers and Kadogo protesting the arrest of their leader, Commandant Masasu Nindaga.⁵² The large array of alleged charges for which he was arrested included corruption, the creation of a tribal militia and private prison, links with foreign intelligence agencies, introducing dissension into army ranks, and smoking marijuana. Masasu was a powerful figure in the ADFL and among the Tutsis, but many suspected him of not being a “true” Congolese despite his popularity in the army.

At the same time, the new regime in Kinshasa was increasingly becoming pro-Katangan. When the OBMA (*Office des Biens Mal Acquis*, literally “the office of ill-gotten goods”) was established, its goal was to punish leaders of the Second Republic who had engaged in corruption.

The Tutsi-Lubakat power struggle took an important turn when Kabila began marginalizing or diminishing the importance of the ADFL as a political force. He progressively substituted his own personal power for the legitimacy he had acquired from that organization in which power was supposedly collectively shared. In the ADFL, Kabila was only a spokesperson—one who over a period of time gradually imposed himself as the leader of the whole organization. He even succeeded in acquiring veto power on all ADFL decisions beginning in January 1997. Immediately after achieving power, the ADFL was led by a triumvirate composed of Deogratias Bugera as secretary general, Laurent Kabila as president, and Gaetan Kakudji as deputy secretary general. Only two original founders of the ADFL were still present: Bugera and Kabila. Of the others, André Kissasse Ngandu was killed mysteriously in 1996 and Masasu had been arrested on November 25, 1997. Bugera was progressively weakened or marginalized politically. Indeed, after preventing him from attending meetings of the *Conseil des Ministres*, Kabila pushed his own party, the PRP, into power, at the expense of other ADFL groups. In October and November of 1997, the press in Kinshasa reported the efforts of the president to impose the PRP as the dominant political force under the leadership of Leonard Mulopo Kapita, a Lumumbist from Bandundu. In November 1998, the ADFL was proclaimed ineffective and Kabila encouraged the creation of organizations such as GRAC (*Groupe d'Action pour le Redressement du Congo*) of Charles Okoto and Mwenze

Kongolo and the GAS (*Groupe Action de Soutien à L.D. Kabila*), which were used to glorify Kabila's public image. To further undermine the Alliance, Kabila no longer mentioned in his public pronouncements that the liberation of the Congo had begun with the creation of the ADFL in October 1996. He backdated the beginnings of liberation to the 1960s with that decade's insurrections against neocolonial rule. Members of the government no longer pledged allegiance to ADFL as an "authority of transition," but to the Constitution of the DRC.⁵³ At the same time, Information Minister Sakombi Inongo geared up his campaign to build Kabila's personality cult. Kabila was presented as a symbol of "national renewal" (*renouveau national*) after the Simba, the national soccer team that took third place among twenty-six teams participating in the Twenty-First Africa Cup of Nations tournament held in Burkina Faso in February 1998.

The period between January and August 1998 saw a further deterioration of the Tutsi power, when Kabila reorganized his personal staff. Jean Mpiana, a Lubakat attorney and human rights activist in Lubumbashi was appointed Kabila's legal assistant. Another Lubakat, Guillaume Mpiana, was appointed deputy secretary for administrative affairs. Even though his task was not clearly defined in the nomination decree, his appointment seemed to have been motivated by the desire to bring more Lubakat into Kabila's staff. Tensions between the newcomers and the Tutsi were at their height when the first anniversary of Kabila's takeover was celebrated. The immediate consequence was that the ADFL failed to rally enough people at the football stadium, the Stade des Martyrs (formerly known as Kamanyola Stadium under Mobutu). During the ceremony, security services arrested even a high-ranking Rwandan officer accused of violating the ban on carrying weapons into the stadium. Because the officer was sitting behind Kabila, this violation was viewed as an attempted coup d'état. The officer was immediately subdued and taken into custody. The meeting of heads of state, which was supposed to take place before the festivities, was canceled because of the absence of main ADFL backers such as Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Eduardo Dos Santos of Angola, Pasteur Bizimungu of Rwanda, and Pierre Buyoya of Burundi. Only two heads of state attended the anniversary celebration: Ange Patasse of the Central African Republic (CAR) and Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe.

On January 3, 1998, Kabila publicly announced his new administration. Even though all the members of the first government were maintained, the internal reshuffling clearly showed the new predominance of the Katangans. Gaetan Kakudji, the governor of Katanga, became minister of state in charge of the interior while simultaneously serving as the ADFL deputy secretary general.⁵⁴ With the accumulation of these portfolios, Kakudji replaced Bugera as the second most powerful man in the

country. This reinforcement of the Katangan position coincided with the development of tensions between the DRC, Uganda, and Rwanda. On May 31, 1998, Kabila denounced the role played by Uganda and Rwanda in the exploitation of Congolese national resources along the eastern border. This move was followed by rumors of a rupture between Kabila and Bizima Karaha, a Tutsi serving as Kabila's foreign affairs minister. Karaha's political adviser, Biyoya Makutu, openly criticized Kabila by characterizing his foreign policy as "unrealistic." The atmosphere of insecurity and nervousness led Kabila to arrest Tutsis and other Congolese high-ranking officials whose loyalty he questioned.⁵⁵ This political climate triggered a third reshuffling of the administration, which was made public on June 1, 1998. In this new structure, the position of the Katangans grew even stronger. In addition to the presidency and the Ministry of Defense (both held by Kabila), Katangans headed the following ministries as well: Interior (Kakudji), Justice (Mzenze Kongolo), Mines (Kibassa Maliba), Strategic Zones of Development (Umba Kyamitala), Economy (Nyembo Kabemba), Transport and Communications (Mova Sakanyi), and Youth and Sports (Nduba Kimbayi). The governor of the central bank, Jean-Claude Masangu Mulongo, was another Lubakat. Heads of important services such as immigration and railroads too were Lubakat or Katangans. The Katangans even took control of the leadership of the ADFL. Indeed, Mutom Tshibal replaced Bugera, who has been given the honorific post of *Ministre d'Etat Délégué à la Présidence*.⁵⁶ Even though Bizima Karaha was kept as foreign affairs minister, a deep frustration was felt among the Tutsis, a feeling that was exacerbated by the armed forces' decision to disperse the Tutsis into different units across the country at the end of February 1998. This led to a mutiny of the Banyamulenge, forcing the FAC military leadership to reverse its decision. After negotiations, Tutsi soldiers remained concentrated in their garrisons in North and South Kivu. The situation of the Tutsis worsened on July 11, 1998, when James Kabarebe was dismissed as the army chief of staff and was replaced by the Lubakat Celestin Kifwa. Rumors of a coup to be carried out by Kabarebe began circulating in Kinshasa, causing Kabila to reinforce his personal security. On July 27, 1998, Rwandan soldiers were ordered to leave the DRC, and in the night of July 28–29, 1998, their repatriation commenced at the airports in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi.⁵⁷ Simultaneously, Kabila was building close military ties with Zimbabwe, while the Lubakat reinforced their control of the military intelligence service, DEMIAP, with the appointment of Kabolo Mydia Vita as its head.

Political marginalization of the Banyamulenge was the primary factor behind the military uprising, but proposed constitutional revisions also played a significant role. The most delicate issue in the draft constitution was the citizenship of the Banyarwanda. The Constitution composed during the "Democratic Transition" under Mobutu was almost identical

to the 1964 Constitution of Luluabourg, which defined a Congolese citizen as of June 30, 1960 as “every person, of whom one of his ancestors is or was a member of one of the tribes established within the territorial limits of the Republic of Zaire from the 1st of August 1885.” Someone was Congolese if he or she, at the date of independence, had a direct ancestor to whom the colonial authorities had assigned the status of “immatriculated Congolese” or “native.” The Constitutional Commission drafting the new constitution seemingly rejected this principle, defining citizenship in their proposed document “as an attachment of an individual to the state.” Although the new constitution circumvented tribal affiliation in defining citizenship, it did cause considerable controversy on account of Article 12, which concerned eligibility for the presidency. It stated that only individuals whose both parents were Congolese could occupy that office. In essence, this article defined the “real” Congolese as an individual who acquired citizenship through the blood of both parents, reaffirming the colonial distinction between “native” and “non-native” Congolese, and indirectly maintaining the tribal dimension with regard to the citizenship question. Hutus and Tutsis, never seen as distinct ethnic groups, were deeply dissatisfied with the draft since different interpretations could still prevent them from enjoying the full rights of citizenship.⁵⁸ When the Banyamulenge rebellion began on August 2, 1998, the fear of the Banyarwanda was confirmed. The final draft of the Constitution proposed that a Congolese citizen is one who had at least one parent who is or was a member of one of the tribes of the Congo at the time of independence. The Tutsis, victimized by political marginalization and denied full Congolese citizenship, rebelled again in order to protect their rights and to overthrow a regime they helped put in place.

RESENTMENT OF THE TUTSI IN THE KIVUS

The situation in the Kivus was even more dangerous for the Tutsis.⁵⁹ The anti-Tutsi sentiment had intensified after Kabila’s takeover, beginning with the October 1996 insurrection.⁶⁰ Intellectuals in Bukavu voiced frustrations against the anarchic occupation of property and administrative posts. They also criticized the subjective criteria used to appoint individuals to positions of authority, the violation of citizen rights (like the use of whips in the street and other forms of humiliation), and the suspension of industrial activities. Civil society was also growing frustrated by the new regime. Indeed, human rights organization such as Groupe Jérémie publicly complained about the mono-ethnic (Tutsi) composition of the ADFL and the massive Tutsi presence in the popular army. Several reports of the “Tutsification” of the Kivus contained warnings of an explosion of ethnic hatred.⁶¹ Leaflets announcing the creation of the *Front de Libération contre l’Occupation Tutsi* (FLOT) were distributed.

The stated objective of this movement was resistance against the Tutsi occupation and expansionism.⁶²

In North Kivu, violence exploded—especially in the territories of Masisi and Kalehe. Tensions were so high that violence erupted over relatively trivial matters. For example, other Kivutians accused Banyamulenge soldiers of not respecting traditional chiefs. The incident that sparked violence in the Kalehe territory started when Tutsi soldiers humiliated Chief Chabango and other dignitaries by forcing them to carry the soldiers' baggage. This act enraged the Mayi-Mayi militia and the local Batembo and Batiri people. With the Hutu Interahamwe and ex-FAR as reinforcements, this group attacked the Tutsi soldiers, killing twelve of them. The situation escalated further when the Rwandan troops came to the defense of the Tutsi soldiers, killing many innocent civilians after the Mayi-Mayi and others had withdrawn. The Mayi-Mayi, who joined the ADFL during the war of liberation, then turned against Kabila and the Tutsis. From their perspective, the ADFL appeared to be composed of Rwandan forces, and thus they saw the ADFL victory in the east as simply a form of Rwandan colonization of the Kivus.

In South Kivu too, violence erupted frequently. In Bukavu, anti-Rwandan and specifically anti-Tutsi sentiment intensified after the Mayi-Mayi attacks. Violence became widespread in the zones of Uvira and Fizi, encouraging the formation of a movement called *Alliance pour la Résistance Démocratique* (ARD). The stated objective of this organization was to free the Congo from all Rwandan and Tutsi occupation. In Baraka in South Kivu and in Kalemie in North Katanga, Banyamulenge and non-Tutsi army units clashed in November 1997 as a result of the arrest of Masasu Nindaga. In December, the Mayi-Mayi launched a massive attack on Bukavu. Radio Patriote, a clandestine radio station, broadcast messages calling for the return of all Tutsis to Rwanda. Civil society groups attempted to mediate the conflict, but violence continued and entire villages, schools, and health centers were burnt to the ground.⁶³ The absence of authority in some areas allowed Interahamwe militia and ex-FAR to act with impunity, and to even install Hutu chiefs. The insecurity was so widespread that in the Ruwenzori Mountains of North Kivu, two Ugandan rebel groups, the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) and Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), regularly raided villages to get food and other commodities.

Two commissions were appointed by the minister of interior in September 1997 to curb the violence, and a series of public meetings were organized in the two Kivus. Among the issues raised were accusations of Tutsi triumphalism and the existence of a secret document in which Kabila agreed to give up a part of the Kivu in exchange for military support from the Tutsis. The report published after the meetings called for the immediate resolution of the citizenship question and also of the

endemic security, economic, and social problems. These efforts from Kinshasa did not stop the violence; *Mayi-Mayi* attacks continued against the FAC and Tutsi interests. The expulsion of the Rwandan troops in July 1998 also led to the feeling of insecurity among the Banyamulenge. The situation became so volatile that Kabila himself was forced to travel to South Kivu on January 20, 1998. In Bukavu, Kabila made a speech in Swahili in which he vehemently defended the Banyamulenge. He accused the *Mayi-Mayi* of being an insurrectionist force backed by local intellectuals. The repression and arrest of traditional chiefs and intellectuals followed Kabila's words. The Bembe and different militia members were disarmed. But because of the charged atmosphere following the expulsion of Rwandan troops, the Banyamulenge refused to give up their weapons. Tutsi soldiers also resisted the order to disperse among varied units of the FAC across the DRC.⁶⁴

Violence was rampant everywhere in the Kivus; the FAC found it nearly impossible to distinguish members of the militias from the rest of the population. The eradication of the *Mayi-Mayi* was thus made enormously problematic, involving frequent killings of unarmed civilians. Making matters worse, fighting broke out among local chiefs, which was generally attributed to the *Mayi-Mayi*. In the Masisi area in North Kivu, Hunde chiefs recruited young men to prevent the Tutsi from coming back to reclaim their grazing land. Some of the robbing and looting by the FAC was also blamed on the *Mayi-Mayi*. On account of all of this regional instability, government forces initiated a crackdown, mobilizing the FAC in January 1998, resulting in numerous civilian deaths from the start. FAC forces justified their abuse of noncombatants by claiming that they were hiding the *Mayi-Mayi*. In return, the people of Butembo accused the FAC of "summary executions, the burning of villages, and torture in the name of fighting the *Mayi-Mayi*."⁶⁵ In response to an invasion of the Butembo by the *Mayi-Mayi*, the FAC initiated a massacre in February, leaving roughly 300 people dead. The *Mayi-Mayi* seemed to have attacked Butembo in response to the killing of civilians carried out by the FAC in January. Violent incidents in Butembo and the nearby town of Beni continued throughout the spring as the repression of the *Mayi-Mayi* and Bangilima⁶⁶ escalated. Fighting an elusive enemy proved frustrating for the FAC, compounding the violence it perpetrated against innocent civilians.

In all, Kabila's regime failed to maintain peace and security in the east. The Tutsis' situation grew more and more precarious until they finally rebelled against Kabila in August 1998.

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The Rebellion

A SWEEPING MILITARY OFFENSIVE

War erupted on August 2, 1998.¹ The first skirmishes occurred in Bukavu where Banyamulenge soldiers attacked the city jail and freed their fellow tribesmen imprisoned after the February mutiny.² The two Tutsi-Banyamulenge remaining in the Kabila government—Deogratias Bugera (the former secretary general of the ADFL) and Bizima Karaha (the foreign affairs minister)—were said to have left Kinshasa to join the Tutsi rebels in the east. These rumors were confirmed when Bizima Karaha announced from Goma that the rebellion was “a country-wide revolution to topple Kabila.”³ In an interview with a Congolese newspaper, he explained that “Kabila surroun[ded] himself with members of his Balukat clan from the Katanga province.”⁴ On August 3, Sylvain Mbuchy, a senior Banyamulenge officer and the commander of the Tenth Battalion of the Congolese Army, declared on the radio station *Voix du Peuple*, “We, the army of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have decided to remove President Laurent-Désiré Kabila from power.”⁵ Ilunga Kabambi, another officer, announced that “after consultations, the military command has decided to withdraw support from the government in Kinshasa.” He insisted that “since Kabila achieved power, the country has been heading toward the worst. We have enough of him, even though he has only been in power for a short period of time.”⁶ Some Banyamulenge leaders went as far as to claim that the two Kivus would become an autonomous zone separated from the rest of the country.⁷ The Kabila government accused Rwanda and Uganda of being behind the rebellion in the east⁸ and immediately began a propaganda campaign accusing Tutsis of wanting “a special status as a minority, but in a country of 300 ethnic groups, it was impossible to grant it.”⁹ On August 3 there was a simultaneous mutiny in Kinshasa. At Camp Tshatshi, shooting broke out and continued throughout the night. Rwandan soldiers were resisting their transfer to Kigali¹⁰ and intense fighting erupted near the airport outside

of Kinshasa. As loyalist troops dealt with these mutinies, yet another uprising took place in Kisangani.

On August 4, the rebel strategy took a more spectacular turn when Commander James Kabarebe hijacked a plane belonging to a domestic carrier, Congo Airlines (CAL). The hijacking happened in Goma, where rebels controlled both the city and the airport. The plane was flown to the military airbase of Kitona in the Bas-Congo province, thus opening up a second front in the west.¹¹ Kitona, a town situated 300 kilometers southwest of Kinshasa, contained some 20,000 former soldiers of the Mobutu army in the process of being retrained for incorporation in the new Congolese Army. In Kinshasa, Kabila urged neighboring states to resist the temptation to get involved in this new conflict. Minister of Presidential Affairs Pierre Victor Mpoyo declared on state television that the rebellion was planned by foreign officers (Rwandans) who were recently ordered home. He also bragged about how the FAC had beaten back the rebellion in Kinshasa itself.¹² Even though loyalist troops had the situation under control in Kinshasa, the rebellion continued to spread in both the east and southwest parts of the DRC.

Indeed, in the eastern front, ADFL members in North Kivu declared that they would join the rebellion.¹³ From Bukavu and Goma, the rebellion spread to Baraka roughly 180 kilometers south of Bukavu. On August 3, fighting began in the town of Kindu in the Maniema province. Government troops stationed there started hunting down Banyamulenge soldiers, forcing them into a central location. In Uvira, Banyamulenge soldiers and civilian Tutsi were killed, and many fled the town.¹⁴ On August 3–4, Rwandan troops were first observed among the rebels, with a huge concentration in the town of Monova between Bukavu and Goma. The Rwanda-DRC border crossings at Uvira, Goma, and Bukavu were closed, but fighting between the Banyamulenge and loyalist troops continued in Baraka, Fizi, and Mboko, south of Uvira. In Uvira itself, fighting began on August 4. Mortar fire was heard nearby and the situation became tense in the city. At the end of the first week, the towns of Bukavu, Goma, and Uvira had fallen into rebel hands with no resistance from the population. On August 6, the involvement of Rwanda was becoming obvious: despite the official border closing, a large number of trucks containing military equipment were seen crossing into the DRC.¹⁵

The unstable situation in the east forced many inhabitants of Bukavu to flee to the Rwandan town of Cyangugu. These individuals, around 600 and mostly Tutsi-Banyamulenge, described fierce fighting in the east.¹⁶ Throughout the DRC, ethnic tensions led to the disintegration of public order: looting, vehicle theft, carjacking, and extrajudicial settling of differences took place simultaneously with military operations. Meanwhile, Rwandan forces that had not left the country with the

expulsion that was ordered on July 27, 1998 converged near Goma and Bukavu. These Rwandans joined Tutsi-Banyamulenge forces to prepare for further offensives throughout the country. In the second week of the uprising, the towns of Beni and Butembo fell under rebel control. Information Minister Didier Mumengi accused Ugandan forces of entering the DRC to help the rebellion in the fight over Beni. Rebel military convoys including tanks, trucks, and armored vehicles were heading toward the town of Bunia on August 10.¹⁷ This advance prompted the government radio network to broadcast inflammatory messages calling on the population to attack the Tutsis with “machetes and knives.” The *Radio Télévision Nationale Congolaise* (RTNC) ordered Congolese people to arm themselves with “machetes, spears, arrows, hoes, spades, rakes nails, truncheons, irons, barbed wires, stones and the like to kill the Rwandan-Tutsi.” In Bunia, the authorities confiscated telecommunication equipments.¹⁸ The DRC government sent reinforcements to defend Bunia, while planes loaded with troops and equipment arrived in Kisangani, which were then loaded on trucks that set out for Bunia, but bad roads hampered their progress. Two Ugandan army columns backed by tanks converged near Bunia to assist the rebels, and the city fell on August 12.¹⁹

The Banyamulenge/Rwandan military forces continued to fight loyalist troops in Kisangani. Jean Pierre Ondekane, a rebel commander, announced that his forces took the towns of Lubutu and Fizi. Kisangani itself fell under the rebel control on August 15, and Uganda’s Thirty-second Battalion, which had moved into Rwanda, was airlifted into the city despite bombing raids by Kabila’s forces. The Banyamulenge/Rwandan forces that had taken Uvira began moving southward toward Kalemie in the Katanga province. Katanga, being Kabila’s home province and that of the bulk of the FAC troops (now dominated by the Katangan Tigers), made this rebel move symbolically and strategically significant. On August 25, the Katangan city of Kalemie was conquered by the Rwandan-allied *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD) rebels. But this sweeping offensive met with substantial resistance throughout the east. Indeed, the rebels were confronted by Mayi-Mayi militia in Uvira, and rumors circulated of Burundian soldiers crossing over to Uvira to help Kabila’s forces fight against the RCD.

On the western front, the confusion at the Kitona airbase began to clear up on August 5–6, and the circumstances surrounding the hijacked plane flown to western Congo became known. In an interview with Radio France Internationale, the Nigerian pilot Raymond Gngang said that he was taken by force to the military base of Kitona from Goma. Three planes were taken to Kitona carrying Rwandan troops, including the former DRC chief of staff James Kabarebe. After reaching Kitona, Kabarebe ordered him to fly back to Kigali, but instead he flew to Lagos and then

to Kinshasa.²⁰ While the fighting continued on the western front, the aircraft captured at the Goma airport were used by the Banyamulenge-Rwandan forces to ferry troops and supplies to the western DRC near Kitona. It appeared that the Banyamulenge/Rwandan forces flew a substantial number of troops to the Kitona military base west of Matadi, and it was reported that they persuaded hundreds or thousands of ex-FAZ soldiers to join the rebellion. Together, they captured Kitona and the nearby port of Muanda and then advanced toward Boma and Matadi. In response, the government moved troops and supplies to Matadi in defense of the approach to Kinshasa.²¹ On August 6, the rebel forces took control of the oil town of Muanda and the naval base of Banana.²² The rebels captured two Americans working for the oil company Chevron hostage near the Cabinda enclave belonging to Angola; these workers were later released and evacuated to Angola.²³ With the town of Muanda and the Banana naval base firmly under rebel control, loyalist general Eluki Monga Aundu appealed for a general mobilization of the Congolese people. He described the country as occupied by foreign forces. Government troops still held the towns of Matadi and Boma southwest of Kinshasa but were under direct threat from the rebels.²⁴

The turning point of the war came ten days after the uprising when Zimbabwe decided to provide military assistance to the Kabila regime. Ten Zimbabwean officers arrived in the DRC to assess the government's military needs.²⁵ At the same time, Kabila's government reconciled with the *Mayi-Mayi* militia who had been opposing the Banyamulenge since the overthrow of Mobutu.²⁶ Ex-FAZ generals offered their support to Kabila, while other officers who had stayed in the country after Mobutu's overthrow also pledged to assist Kabila. On August 12, Tutsi rebels wounded during the mutinies in Kinshasa showed up in Congo-Brazzaville with their weapons. The rebels' military success in the west continued with the capture of the Inga hydroelectric power plant, thus plunging Kinshasa and many other cities into darkness.²⁷ After taking control of the airport of Matadi, rebels took the city itself on August 13.

Two weeks into the war, Kabila named his son Joseph as the army chief of staff, replacing Major Celestin Kifwa. He also announced the creation and arming of a popular militia to defeat the Rwandan-backed rebels. After the capture of Matadi, the rebels continued to move toward Kinshasa while Kabila's forces prepared for a showdown in the strategic corridor linking Kinshasa and the south Atlantic.²⁸ But loyalists forces suddenly found themselves in a state of confusion. No one knew of Kabila's whereabouts since he no longer appeared to be in Kinshasa and did not attend the defense minister's conference in Harare.²⁹ His troops were in a total disarray; even the renowned Zulu Battalion defected to the rebels in the west.

ROLLING BACK THE REBELS ON THE WESTERN FRONT

On August 18, Kabila finally obtained effective military support from Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia. These forces arrived as official representatives of the Southern African Development Committee (SADC), an intergovernmental organization created in 1992 by fifteen Southern African countries to help foster economic development and regional security.³⁰ By mid-August, battles raged at the military base of Mbanza-Ngungu and the town of Lukala twenty-five miles down the road to the sea. Loyalist forces carried out air strikes against rebel positions along the Matadi-Kinshasa road and in the city of Mbanza-Ngungu.³¹ This city had fallen under rebel control on August 19, as did the town of Kisantu, just up the road to Kinshasa from Mbanza-Ngungu. Tensions rose in Kinshasa as fighting could be heard southwest of the city. Loyalists in the city distributed weapons to roughly 1,000 young men. The situation became so alarming that 150 British Royal Marines joined 250 French soldiers in Congo-Brazzaville in evacuating their respective citizens from Kinshasa. The United States also sent a marine taskforce to evacuate Americans, and the Belgian government expedited the withdrawal of 990 of its citizens.

As Kinshasa prepared for an attack, the conflict began to take a radical turn as Zimbabwean and Angolan forces arrived to rescue Kabila's embattled regime. Military technicians and advisers from Zimbabwe arrived in Kinshasa, along with soldiers disembarking at the Kinshasa Ndjili Airport. One-hundred Angolan commandos supported by tanks moved from the Cabinda enclave into the western DRC. Some Angolans troops also disembarked with Zimbabwean soldiers at Ndjili.³² Angolan troops immediately entered into action against rebel forces and took control of a central supply base in the west. Zimbabwean troops also quickly moved to the frontlines and contributed to the effort to push back rebels in the corridor leading to Kinshasa. Angolan forces quickly seized the military base of Kitona, as well as the towns of Banana, Muanda, and Boma, from RCD rebels. When Angolan forces captured the town of Mbanza-Ngungu, the event prompted Information Minister Didier Mumengi to predict that "the western front would be mopped up within days."³³ Angolan and Zimbabwean forces continued to take rebel positions, killing hundreds of rebel troops in the process. A report circulated that rebels holding the Inga hydroelectric power plant were negotiating a surrender, threatening to destroy the facility if they were not granted a safe passage out of the area. Namibian troops also intervened on Kabila's behalf, but their contributions were minimal. In the light of these victories, Kabila returned to Kinshasa from Lubumbashi around August 25. He called the inhabitants to resist the

rebels and urged the villagers to use traditional weapons such as spears, bows, and arrows.

Reports reached Kinshasa that Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers had been captured in Kitona, leaving about 6,000 rebels on the western front. The RCD leader Ernest Wamba Dia Wamba publicly condemned Kabila's internationalizing the conflict, reflecting the difficulties rebel troops were facing. On August 26, the government announced that rebels had infiltrated the outskirts of Kinshasa.³⁴ Information Minister Didier Mumengi called on young people to form self-defense units. The rebels succeeded in attacking Kinshasa's airport and the suburbs but met with a strong Zimbabwean force in southeast Kinshasa. The Zimbabweans managed to kill hundreds of rebels there.³⁵ Allied forces combed the capital in search of rebel infiltrators while several hundred people fled the suburbs east of the city. On August 28, the rebels still held the Inga hydroelectric power plant, leaving the city without electricity. This contributed to the atmosphere of chaos and lawlessness in Kinshasa, where mobs captured and lynched suspected rebels.³⁶ Ten were burnt and beaten, and local authorities rounded up many Tutsi civilians and placed them in camps such as the military installation of Kokolo.

The DRC leadership then vowed to attack the rebels in their eastern stronghold. Rumors circulated that Zimbabwean and Angolan troops were landing at the airport of the far northeastern city of Isiro, preparing to attack rebel-held cities of Bunia and Kisangani. In Kinshasa, the situation had become less tense after the rebel infiltrators had been flushed out of the suburbs of Masina and Kimbanseke. The road between the Kinshasa city center and the Ndjili Airport was partially reopened.³⁷ The Tutsis detained in Kabila's jails were offered evacuation to Congo-Brazzaville by Congo's government.³⁸ Kinshasa experienced a shortage of basic foodstuffs due to a month's disruption of supply lines. Flour was scarce and the price of bread tripled. As a result, the World Food Program began airlifting food to the city from Congo-Brazzaville: 215 tons of food was airlifted from the city of Pointe-Noire and 700 tons were ferried across the Congo River from Brazzaville.³⁹ Despite these improvements, many important food items from the eastern regions were still unavailable in Kinshasa, so the World Food Program opened up nutrition centers to feed the children across the city.⁴⁰ In Kinshasa, food and gas prices were driven upward by frequent fuel shortages. Inflation skyrocketed, leading to demonstrations against Lebanese and Asian shop owners.⁴¹ The war devastated the economy, causing unemployment to rise and purchasing power to decrease.⁴² To help cope with the crisis, humanitarian organizations provided assistance to 70,000 vulnerable people, and the government distributed water and electricity free of charge. This crisis continued in Kinshasa until the end of November 1998, when roadblocks and checkpoints were dismantled.

Military preparations for a major offensive on the eastern front began in Kinshasa in September. Interahamwe militia and ex-FAR, having fled across the river, regrouped in the city to join pro-Kabila forces. This arrival of the Hutu militia on September 21, 1998 coincided with preparations to send 175 Tutsi civilians held in Camp Kokolo to Brazzaville. In addition, roughly 1,000 Chadian troops financed by Libya arrived to help Kabila's forces. There were also reports that Ugandan POWs captured by Angolans in western DRC were held in a camp in the Kalahari desert. After some administrative reshuffling, key members of the previous government who had backed Kabila were reappointed to their posts. Among them were Mwenze Kongolo as minister of justice, Gaetan Kakudji as minister of the interior, and Mawapanga Mwana Nanga as minister of finance.⁴³ Bemba Saolona—father of rebel leader Jean-Pierre Bemba and spokesperson for CEOs under Mobutu—was appointed minister of economy and industry, partly since he had major plantation interests in the rebel-controlled east.⁴⁴

THE EASTERN FRONT

With momentum on their side, allied forces shifted their attention to the east. In the first week of September 1998, loyalist forces encircled the rebel town of Kalemie in Katanga and shelled it for two days, killing twenty-five people and wounding forty. Loyalists also bombarded the rebel stronghold of Lubutu in the Maniema province. To organize his offensive, Kabila appointed four former generals who had served in Mobutu's army to head forces in the southeast: Marcelin Lukama Musikami, Mulimbi Mabilo, Ngwala Panzu, and Bekazwa Bakundolo.⁴⁵ By mid-September, Kindu, the capital of the Maniema province, remained in loyalist hands and served as a base for aerial attacks on the rebel towns of Kalemie, Lubutu, and Kisangani in Province Orientale. Massive supply operations centered on Kindu funneled supplies further east.⁴⁶ Roughly 2,000 Sudanese troops also accompanied allied forces on this campaign.⁴⁷ On September 17, rebel forces advancing on Kindu captured ten Sudanese. Pro-Kabila forces also received the help of 700 Ugandan rebels led by Taban Amin, son of the former dictator Idi Amin Dada. These fighters arrived by plane from Sudan where they had served as members of a variety of rebel groups: the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a Christian guerrilla group; the Uganda National Rescue Front (UNFRF); the West Nile Bank Front (WNBFB); and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF).⁴⁸

Despite this military buildup, rebels captured Kindu on October 12. RCD rebels troops moved in to clean up pockets of resistance in the streets and around the airport, and residents of this strategically significant town began fleeing. During the three days of fighting before Kindu fell, no Zimbabweans, Angolans, or Namibians troops came to the aid

of Kabila's forces. Only the Sudanese fought alongside governmental forces in Kindu; RCD troops highlighted this when the three Sudanese soldiers they had captured were paraded in the streets of the rebel-held city of Goma.⁴⁹ During the battle of Kindu, ex-FAR, Interahamwe, and Burundian insurgents were also taken prisoner. For the rebels, Kindu was a strategic point to conduct attacks on Lubumbashi in the Katanga province and Mbuji-Mayi in the Kasai Oriental province. RCD rebels experienced a string of military successes after the fall of Kindu. Kilima, eighty kilometers east of Kindu, and Buta, 250 kilometers north of Kisangani, both came under RCD control.⁵⁰ Rebels also took Ubundu, 120 kilometers north of Kisangani,⁵¹ as well as Kasango and Lusangi southeast of Kindu.⁵² The fall of Kindu created panic in the capital, prompting Kabila to recruit "young volunteers" to be sent in the interior. With this shifting momentum, rebel officers pushed toward Lubumbashi and Mbuji-Mayi. If the rebels could seize Mbuji-Mayi, the diamond capital of the RDC, it would deprive Kabila of resources necessary to finance the war effort.⁵³ Further west, the rebels also captured the town of Samba in the Équateur province⁵⁴ and publicly acknowledged for the first time that Rwandan army officers helped fight Kabila's troops in Kindu.⁵⁵ The fall of Kindu proved that Kabila's ability to reconquer the eastern part of the country was limited. The situation was made more dismal when several top loyalist military officers, such as Colonel Songolo Nura, were reported to have defected to the rebel side. In their advance, the rebels captured sixteen Zimbabweans in the town of Kabalo in Katanga, while four others were killed during the fighting.⁵⁶

This string of military reversals finally convinced the reluctant Zimbabweans, Angolans, and Namibians to intervene on the eastern front.⁵⁷ Kabila intensified his preparations for a major counteroffensive and persuaded other countries to join the fight. On September 28, Congo-Brazzaville, the Central African Republic (CAR), and other African nations prepared to send troops to fight against the rebellion. Kabila's forces also recruited ordinary Rwandan Hutu refugees in Congo-Brazzaville.⁵⁸ About 7,000 Interahamwe had already begun fighting with Kabila's troops in Mbuji-Mayi.⁵⁹ Augustin Bizimungu, ex-chief of staff of the FAR responsible for the 1994 genocide, led these troops. Zimbabwe sent war planes to the town of Kananga in the Kasai Occidental province⁶⁰ and 2,000 troops to Mbuji-Mayi in addition to the 3,000 already in the DRC. Angolan troops arrived at Kananga as well,⁶¹ and Namibia increased the number of its troops from 300 to 2,000, many were airlifted to Kananga from the Namibian airbase at Grootfontein.⁶²

In early November, government forces sunk two boats transporting rebel troops on Lake Tanganyika, signaling the beginning of an attempt to cut off rebel supply lines coming through the port city of Kalemie.⁶³ Allied forces gathered around the city and attacked it on November 10,

1998. Days later, the government air force bombarded rebel targets along the shore of Lake Tanganyika, destroying a supply column near Moba, south of Kalemie.⁶⁴ Allied forces also shot down a rebel cargo plane carrying ammunition to Kalemie. On November 25, Zimbabwe combat planes attacked the forward positions of rebels around Kalemie and sunk six barges ferrying rebel troops and equipment from Kalemie to Moba.⁶⁵ The Zimbabwean strategy was to attack from Kalemie and then progress northward along Lake Tanganyika, deploying troops along the high plateau of the Ruzizi River plain, with a force of roughly 9,000 to 10,000 troops reinforced by MI-24 Hind helicopters.⁶⁶ On November 27, the allies repelled a rebel offensive from the town of Moba.⁶⁷ Zimbabwean forces killed some 1,000 rebels in the process. In the fighting, one Namibian soldier was killed and seven wounded. The bodies of Burundian soldiers were also discovered in Moba, proving that Burundi supported the rebels. It was later confirmed that Burundi had sent 3,000 of its troops into the DRC.⁶⁸ Zimbabwean forces continued to dominate the air, bombing the small town of Kabalo while allied troops were attempting to capture it. Fanning out westward toward the end of December, allied forces inflicted heavy casualties during bombing raids on rebel positions in Kongolo north of Kabalo, Falanga, and Kalembelembe.⁶⁹ Reports noted that 2,500 new Congolese recruits trained by Zimbabwean, Angolan, and Namibian military advisers were being sent to the front. In Katanga specifically, provincial and military authorities carried out a massive recruitment of youth. Popular Civil Defense (DCP) units distributed weapons to young people of Katangese origin, an act that had unfortunate consequences. These youths used their weapons to terrorize members of other ethnic groups in a way that was reminiscent of the situation from 1991 to 1993.⁷⁰ Around this time, Kabila's Fifth Mechanized Brigade also entered combat in Katanga.⁷¹

But the allied counteroffensive experienced sizable difficulties. While it raged, thirteen of Kabila's officers were executed for "having killed fellow officers, deserting the battlefield, abandoning troops, and giving weapons to the enemy on the road between Kabalo, Muzu, and Kalemie." Kabila meant this harsh justice to serve as a deterrent to other officers, but it did not stem the growing number of foot soldier desertions. Amnesty International estimated 1,000 deserters in Kinshasa and another 1,000 in Katanga. At the root of these desertions was the fact that power was not shared beyond a small group of Katangese officers and Kabila himself, exacerbating ethnic tensions within the allied forces.⁷²

The situation appeared even more dire for Kabila when a mutiny broke out among Zimbabwean troops in the DRC, prompting Mugabe to send 1,500 military police to attempt to bring it under control. The mutineers felt reluctant to fight a war that had nothing to do with Zimbabwe. As a result, the Zimbabwean army court-martialed four senior army

officers for refusing to fight and defying orders. Fear of further mutiny was widespread since soldiers frequently complained about heavy casualties and irregular food and medicine supplies.⁷³ Rebels killed numerous Zimbabwean troops fighting between the towns of Kabalo and Kabinda east of Mbuji-Mayi. Most likely as a result of these debacles, Mugabe sacked Zimbabwean chief of staff General Mike Nyambuya and replaced him with General Amon Chimombe.⁷⁴ Many Namibian soldiers also objected to the war and refused to fight. Some of them were arrested pending disciplinary hearings in Windhoek.⁷⁵ In Kinshasa, new recruits mutinied in a military camp and refused to be sent to the front, resulting in several being killed by loyalists.⁷⁶

Toward the end of November, difficulties for the allied forces compounded when rebel forces seized the Katanga towns of Moba and Kongolo, capturing 352 enemy soldiers in the process. The allied counteroffensive could not prevent the rebels from advancing further southeast and taking the town of Nyunzu, roughly 200 kilometers west of Kalemie.⁷⁷ Heavy fighting continued after the rebels succeeded in landing barges near Moba. In order to channel equipment south, the Tutsi rebels were using roads at night to avoid attacks by the Zimbabwean air force. The rebels pushed even further into Katanga until they clashed with Namibian troops in a battle to control a bridge on the Congo River. The Nzofu bridge, located 250 kilometers west of Kalemie near the town of Kabalo, was a crucial link in the supply chain. Determined to advance, the rebels wheeled southward and captured Pweto, a town on the northern shore of Lake Mweru by the Zambian border, on December 23, 1998.⁷⁸ During the battle for Pweto, the rebels faced 2,000 Burundian insurgents of the *Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie* (FDD) fighting on the side of Kabila's forces but nonetheless overcame them.⁷⁹ Pweto's fall proved devastating for allied troops since it cut their supply line through the southeast. With the capture of Pweto, Nyunzu, and Moba, the rebels controlled a significant part of Katanga and managed to push even further into the province's interior, reaching the towns of Lubao and Pepa in early March 1999.⁸⁰

In central DRC in the Kasai Oriental province, the rebels advanced toward the town of Penge, some 50 kilometers north of Kabinda.⁸¹ But each time rebel forces attempted to advance toward Kinshasa (probably from Kisangani), they met fierce resistance from loyalist troops. The diamond-rich city of Mbuji-Mayi was also well defended by a multinational force. When rebels attacked the city on April 6, 1999, among the dead were 239 Ugandans, including a renowned battalion commander known as "Sakayi."⁸² The rebels did manage to make some gains by taking control of the town of Lubefu and the Lodja Airport, roughly 300 kilometers due north of Mbuji-Mayi.⁸³ Loyalist forces also lost the town of Kakuyu, 900 kilometers north of Lubumbashi. Rebels captured even

Manono, Kabila's hometown, by May 9, 1999.⁸⁴ In response, forces loyal to Kabila bombed Goma and Uvira, killing thirty people and wounding twelve.⁸⁵ This attack reflected Kabila's military desperation, which intensified with numerous executions of soldiers accused of mutiny, disobedience, defections, or complicity with the armed opposition.⁸⁶ In hopes of bettering Kabila's hand, Zimbabwe sent an additional 3,000 soldiers to the DRC, thus pushing the total number of Zimbabwean troops in the country to 11,000. At the end of June 1999, Zimbabwean and Sudanese aircraft continued to bomb rebel positions in Kalemie, Kongolo, and Manono to attempt to strengthen Kabila's position at the bargaining table during peace negotiations underway in the Zambian capital of Lusaka under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Fighting in the eastern front occurred not only in the Katanga, Maniema, and Kasai Oriental provinces. During the first week of September 1998, fierce clashes ripped through the Province Orientale, where the announcement of the allied eastern offensive triggered a panic among the inhabitants of the city of Bunia in the northeastern corner of the DRC, near the Ugandan and Sudanese borders.⁸⁷ The cause of this anxiety was undoubtedly the increasing Sudanese involvement in the DRC conflict. On September 9, the Sudanese government flew military equipment from the city of Juba in southern Sudan to Kabila loyalists in the nearby city of Isiro.⁸⁸ Sudanese planes bombed the Binga trading center in northwestern Province Orientale, wounding twenty civilians. To counter the Sudanese move, Uganda took control of all the airports in northeastern DRC to prevent the Sudanese from using them to attack Kampala. For the same reason, the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA), a predominantly Christian Southern Sudanese rebel group, involved itself in the DRC conflict on the rebel side. Indeed, the SPLA sent troops into the town of Dungu in Province Orientale and forced 30,000 Sudanese refugees there to return to Sudan.⁸⁹

Another theater of operation was the Equateur province, where a new rebel movement appeared in early November 1998 called the *Mouvement de Libération du Congo* (MLC) and led by Jean-Pierre Bemba, the son of the powerful business executive Bemba Saolona, known as "the bosses' boss" under the Mobutu regime. Jean-Pierre Bemba had full backing from Uganda, and MLC troops had entered the battle of Buta in Province Orientale.⁹⁰ Back in Equateur, MLC rebels captured the city of Bumba, prompting the declaration of a curfew on the provincial capital of Mbandaka. The endorsement of the MLC by Mobutu's sons, Manda and Nzanga, also helped it gain momentum. They had parted ways with Kabila since he refused to work toward reconciliation.⁹¹ Late in November, Jean-Pierre Bemba organized a recruitment campaign, enlisting 1,000 young men into the MLC cause.⁹² The MLC then succeeded in taking control of a vast area around Dulia in between Buta

and Bumba. In the process, they killed 200 Chadian troops sent from Gbadolite in the far north of Equateur. The rebels and Bemba's MLC collaborated closely, and there was even some talk of blending the two groups into one. Kisangani became the rebels' military headquarters, from which the organization's chief of staff, the Ugandan James Kazini, operated.

The rise of a new front in the Equateur province forced Kabila to send troops to the region. Despite the infusion of new soldiers, government forces continued to face defeat in northern Equateur, where the MLC captured the towns of Lisala and Gemena, as well as the Mindembo trading center. MLC forces also began to close in on Gbadolite. To counter the MLC's string of victories, allied forces adopted a new strategy to outflank the enemy. To do so, they sent 300 troops into the Central African Republic (CAR).⁹³ From this position, Kabila's forces would enter the DRC from the north in an effort to defend Zongo and Gbadolite; they even announced their intention to try retaking Gemena. The presence of this force of 300 did not prevent the town of Zongo from falling into rebel hands on January 5, 1999.⁹⁴

By the end of May, the Equateur province was largely under rebel control but was still facing stiff resistance from loyalist troops in many towns and villages. On July 9, 1999, Jean-Pierre Bemba arrived in Gbadolite, receiving a rapturous welcome from the population. Gbadolite had been taken by a combined force of MLC and Ugandan troops while Bemba was attending the Lusaka peace talks; James Kazini had served as overall commander of the forces during the assault. Roughly 2,000 government soldiers had fled to CAR, where they were disarmed by the CAR authorities.⁹⁵ Bemba's speech in Gbadolite stated many reasons why the inhabitants should be dissatisfied with the Kabila regime, including the lack of medicine in hospitals and the untreated water in the city that left the 300,000 people living there vulnerable to disease. Bemba also pronounced, "If Kabila fails to honor his signature by not respecting the cease-fire, we will have no choice but to continue to fight." Bemba's position was further strengthened by reports that the president of the CAR, Ange-Félix Patassé, had refused Kabila's request to help recapture Gbadolite.⁹⁶

The military situation in North and South Kivu differed considerably from those in Katanga, Maniema, Equateur, and Orientale provinces since the fighting was mostly between rebel forces and the Mayi-Mayi militia. On September 2, 1998, the Mayi-Mayi attacked the Bagira suburb of Bukavu. The rebels believed that the Mayi-Mayi were hiding among the population. Backed by ex-FAR and Interahamwe, the Mayi-Mayi engaged the rebels in Goma at the beginning of the conflict. Mayi-Mayi and Hutu militias viewed the Tutsi-Banyamulenge as the enemy because of their ties to the Rwandan government.⁹⁷ In mid-September,

a gun battle erupted in Goma between the rebels and the Hutu and Mayi-Mayi militias. For the militias, the objective was not only to conquer Goma but also to invade the Rwandan city of Gisenye, which they saw as the first step toward the overthrow of the Tutsi regime in Kigali. Their assault on Goma was also directed against civilian Tutsis, whose corpses journalists saw strewn in the streets of the city after the attack. Rebel leaders imposed a curfew on Goma after the militia attacks.⁹⁸ On September 24, Hutu and Mayi-Mayi militias assaulted Goma again; the defenders claimed that fifty-six militiamen were killed in this new offensive.⁹⁹ The militias never stopped harassing the rebels, constantly destabilizing rebel-controlled areas.¹⁰⁰

In South Kivu, Burundian FDD insurgents assisted the fight against the rebels, while Charles Simba, leader of the Mayi-Mayi militia in the Fizi and Baraka regions, also offered to join Kabila.¹⁰¹ Simba commanded approximately 10,000 Mayi-Mayi in those areas. Countering these forces were Burundian regular troops who entered the conflict on the side of the anti-Kabila rebels. Mayi-Mayi, Hutu, and Burundian insurgents attacked Bukavu in mid-January 1999. The rebels repulsed the assault, claiming to have killed forty-seven attackers.¹⁰² The Mayi-Mayi did succeed in briefly capturing the town of Mwenga, a rebel stronghold.¹⁰³ These fights manifested the deteriorating relations between Tutsi-Banyamulenge and the Bembe population. The Mayi-Mayi intensified their campaign on the high plateau of Uvira, striking the villages of Kanono and Rubarati twenty kilometers outside of the city of Uvira, with many Bafulero tribesmen and Banyamulenge civilians fleeing from the area. On February 17, fighting between the Banyamulenge and Mayi-Mayi broke out as they attempted to settle their differences in certain areas of South-Kivu, particularly the Kalungwe region.

THE REBEL GROUPS

Earlier on August 8, 1998, the rebellion had announced the nomination of Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma as its leader; he had recently been freed from a government jail in the Katanga province. In a radio interview, Z'Ahidi Ngoma denied that the rebellion was a Banyamulenge or a Rwandan enterprise, insisting that the uprising was a coalition of Congolese people fighting for their rights.¹⁰⁴ Z'Ahidi Ngoma challenged the version of events that was presented by Kabila, who described the conflict as a Rwandan "invasion." The former DRC foreign affairs minister Bizima Karaha became deputy coordinator of the rebel movement. After a meeting of rebel leaders in Bukavu, the movement's spokesperson, Joseph Mudumbi Mulunda, explained that the rebellion had as an objective "to correct Kabila's mistakes and to unite the country." Mudumbi rejected the accusation that the rebellion was planning to divide the country.

On August 9, the rebels officially announced the names of all their leaders: Elyse Buyengo, Emmanuel Kamanzi (both ex-liaison officers between ADFL and the NGOs), Mbusa Nyamwisi, Kalala Shambaye, Maurice Nyambaga, Ngangura Kasole, Mondja Eyoka, Tambwe Mwamba, and Emile Ilunga (a prominent Katangese politician who once favored the secession of his home province). Z'Ahidi Ngoma's opposition party *Forces du Futur* (FF) and the *Forces Novatrices pour l'Union et la Solidarité* (FONUS) led by Joseph Olenghankoy, who had been jailed the previous year, threw their weight behind the rebellion. On August 12, the rebellion revealed its name, *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (Congolese Rally for Democracy, commonly known as the RCD), and also announced that the rebellion was composed of nineteen battalions amounting to 15,000 troops commanded by the Katangan Sylvain Mbuki and Jean-Pierre Ondekane.

Numerous Mobutists traveled to Kampala and Kigali to join the rebellion but were quickly marginalized by the rising movement. On August 17, the rebel movement disclosed its internal organization. The RCD appointed Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, a Mukongo history professor of the Matadi area, as its chairman. Moise Nyarugabo, a Munyamulenge and former government official, served as Wamba dia Wamba's deputy. The economic historian, activist, and negotiator Jacques Depelchin served as the RCD's executive secretary. The executive council was comprised of four civilians and four military commanders, with Professor Lunda Bululu, a lawyer from Katanga, serving as its coordinator. The civilian members included Kalala Shambuye, an ex-ADFL member from Kasai; Tambwe Alexis Mwamba, a former minister under Mobutu; Dr. Bizima Karaha, a Munyamulenge who had served as Kabila's foreign affairs minister; and Mbusa Nyamwisi, an ex-Mayi-Mayi leader from North Kivu. The four military commanders were not mentioned at the time of the publication of this list.

In December 1998, disputes arose between Ugandan and Rwandan forces over influence and control over the rebel movement. The Ugandans helped to create the MLC, active in the Equateur Province, while the Rwandans supported the RDC.¹⁰⁵ These tensions affected the internal political dynamics within the RCD, leading to conflict between Wamba dia Wamba and Lunda Bululu, Mobutu's former prime minister. Wamba accused the ex-Mobutists of being power hungry and corrupt, and that their presence threatened to tear apart the RCD.¹⁰⁶ In an effort to solve internal tensions, the RCD restructured itself again by enlarging its assembly membership from 28 to 147, including 22 military individuals. The RCD expanded from seven to twenty-three departments. The executive council was recomposed as follows: Ernest Wamba dia Wamba as president, Moise Nyarugabo as first vice president, Jean Pierre Ondekane as second vice president, Jacques Depelchin as secretary, Mbusa Nyamwisi

as president of the assembly, and Bizima Karaha as coordinator of the executive committee. The move was an attempt to appease those who felt excluded from the previous governing structure of the rebel movement.

But problems continued within the RCD despite the reorganization, largely on account of Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma's loss of position as vice president of the RCD. He resigned since he felt that the rebel movement was not incorporating all of the political parties that had been struggling against the Mobutu regime since the early 1990s. After resigning, Z'Ahidi Ngoma signaled that he would join the MLC.¹⁰⁷ On January 30, 1999, the situation was so fluid within the RCD that even a key leader such as Deogratias Bugera created a new faction within the RCD itself known as the *Mouvement des Reformateurs*.¹⁰⁸ The situation became even more complex when two Ugandan-backed rebel leaders, Jean-Pierre Bemba and Wamba dia Wamba, became entangled in a personal feud. At the same time, former Mobutu-regime military leaders—Baramoto Kpama, Nzimbi Ngbale, and Mavua Mudima—were seen in Kisangani attempting to join the rebel movement in order to reenter the Congolese political scene. The Rwandan officials rejected the entreaties of the Mobutists, who were thus not allowed to join the rebel movement.¹⁰⁹ Baramoto then reached out to the Ugandan RDC general James Kazini in an attempt to bring the Mobutists into the sphere of the MLC movement, which had close ties to Uganda.

As ominous as these growing tensions within the RCD seemed, by April the rebel coalition faced a much more daunting crisis. Wamba had moved from Goma to Kisangani after having been ousted by a pro-Rwanda faction hostile to his leadership. With his departure, the military leadership seized control of the rebel movement.¹¹⁰ Wamba's departure from Goma marked a substantial rift within the RCD and sparked a clear escalation in the conflict between Rwanda and Uganda.¹¹¹ Rebel commander Jean Pierre Ondekane accused Uganda of trying to disarm RCD troops and forcing them to join the MLC. On May 12, Ondekane accused the Ugandan commander Brigadier General James Kazini of disarming RCD loyalists in Kisangani, Isiro, Beni, Bunia, and Bafaswende.¹¹² It became clear that Wamba's move to Kisangani was a result of his ouster as leader of the RCD. On May 20, the RCD quickly moved to replace Wamba by appointing Dr. Emile Ilunga as leader of the RCD after a special congress in Goma. The aim of that congress was also to resolve the internal dissension created by the removal of Wamba and Lunda Bululu from the RCD leadership.¹¹³ The situation continued to deteriorate between Wamba, his sympathizers, and the RCD itself. Fighting broke out between the two camps, resulting in the death of eight people in Kisangani on May 23.¹¹⁴ The RCD even organized an assassination attempt on Wamba. The situation in Kisangani became tense as internecine conflicts escalated: local radio and television stations

propagandized for the opposing factions, and RCD troops carried out an assault on Wamba's headquarters.¹¹⁵ Forces loyal to Wamba responded by attacking a rival radio station controlled by the Rwandan-backed commander Ondekane.

On May 26, 1999, all of Wamba's loyalists fled Goma and found refuge in Uganda. From there, they crossed back into the DRC to join their leader in Kisangani.¹¹⁶ Among these loyalists was Mbusa Nyamwisi, chairman of the RCD Assembly. He accused the coup plotters of refusing to create a united front against Kabila and not tolerating democratic opposition.¹¹⁷ After Ilunga's appointment as the RCD chairman, the rebel movement restructured itself yet again in early June, creating a new executive body and congress. Ilunga served as leader of the RCD and the executive council. The RCD assembly, composed mostly of Wamba loyalists, was dissolved.¹¹⁸ All of its members moved to Kisangani and created a new organization led by Wamba, which became known as RCD-Kisangani.¹¹⁹

These divisions greatly weakened the RCD, which lost considerable credibility across the DRC. Even the Banyamulenge leader Joseph Mutambo distanced himself from the RCD, accusing it of not being able to protect the Banyamulenge in eastern DRC. Tensions also erupted between Banyamulenge and Rwandan soldiers when Rwandan troops attempted to arrest a Banyamulenge commandant in Uvira.¹²⁰ In an attempt to bridge the differences within the RCD, the Ugandan president, Yoweri Museveni, organized a conference between all the warring factions in the Ugandan city of Kabala. One of the objectives of the conference was to find a common position for the ceasefire agreement negotiations taking place in Lusaka.¹²¹

CONCLUSION

These shifting alliances within new Congolese civil war were striking. Recent allies had become sworn enemies. Indeed, many who had worked together to overthrow the Mobutu regime in 1996 and 1997 now faced each other in combat. According to the Belgian historian of Africa Filip Reyntjens, this realignment of alliances followed the logic of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."¹²² Angola and Zimbabwe had worked together with the Tutsi-dominated ADFL, Rwanda, and Uganda to end Mobutu's regime. In the new conflict, Angola and Zimbabwe were at loggerheads with their former allies. The Angolans became suspicious of the presence of Mobutists on the rebel side. Ex-FAZ leaders Baramoto, Nzimbi, and Mavua, after being expelled from South Africa and the Ivory Coast, had found refuge in Uganda and provided support to the new rebellion from there. Politicians and soldiers who had supported the Mobutu regime also lent their support to the rebellion. The Angolan government

had also become concerned about contacts between the Congolese rebel movement and the insurgent group within its own borders, UNITA. Angola thus did not hesitate to support Kabila, fearing the consequences of an unfriendly regime in Kinshasa.

Zimbabwe became involved in this new DRC conflict mainly for economic reasons. The Zimbabwean business class had enormous interests in the DRC's mining sector, and thus Kabila's defeat would be disastrous for Zimbabwe's economy. These investments were particularly important after Zimbabwe lost the Mozambican market to South Africa despite its support of the victorious *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (FRELIMO) faction during the civil war in Mozambique. Zimbabwe's intervention in the DRC was also a chance for Mugabe to play a role in the region after being overshadowed by Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni and Rwanda's President Paul Kagame heavily backed by the U.S.¹²³ The involvement of Namibia on Kabila's side was both ideological and economic. Kabila and the Namibian president, Sam Nujoma, had been friends during their years in exile in Tanzania. They both belonged to an informal Marxist discussion group.¹²⁴ After Kabila's successful coup, the two leaders partnered in a diamond-mining venture in the DRC. Namibia did not participate in the ADFL war against Mobutu, therefore its involvement in the new DRC civil war marked a significant regional expansion of the conflict. This widening continued even further when Chad, Libya, and Sudan joined the fight on Kabila's side. Some observers saw Chad's intervention as an indirect effort by France to reenter the Congolese political scene. France had lost influence in the region after the Rwandan Patriotic Front's victory in Kigali and the overthrow of the Mobutu regime. Libya's presence may be explained by Muammar Gaddafi's ambition to emerge as a continental leader, while Sudan took part in the DRC conflict mainly to counter Uganda and the SPLA forces aligned with the RCD rebels. Kabila also succeeded in obtaining the diplomatic support of Francophone African countries, which condemned the "aggression" against the DRC in a summit held in the Gabonese capital of Libreville on September 24.¹²⁵

Probably the most significant reconfigurations of alliances were those undertaken by actors on the ground. Indeed, during the 1996–1997 war, the Mayi-Mayi and ADFL-Tutsis worked together to topple the Mobutu regime. This new war changed this equation, since the Mayi-Mayi allied themselves with Kabila to fight the Tutsi-Banyamulenge who they viewed as helping Rwanda to occupy the DRC. The Mayi-Mayi/ADFL coalition also contained ex-FAR and Interahamwe during the 1996–1997 conflict. At this time the Mayi-Mayi, Kabila's forces, and Rwandan insurgents became allies in the fight against the RCD rebels supported by Rwanda, their common enemy. FDD fighters joined Kabila's forces because of their opposition to Tutsi regimes in the Great Lakes region.

Rebel groups coming to Kabila's assistance, such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), Uganda National Rescue Front (UNFRF), West Nile Bank Front (WNBF), and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), can be explained by their common opposition to the Ugandan regime. The alliance of Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, and the Tutsi-Banyamulenge had remained intact since the ADFL war. So the most significant shift was that the Mobutists joined the rebel movement to fight Kabila. The rise of a Mobutist rebel movement—the MLC, largely a Ugandan creation in the Equateur province—was emblematic of this strange realignment. The war that engaged all of these actors was termed “Africa's first world war” by the former U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright. It split the DRC in half and plunged the country into one of the worst recent humanitarian crises on the planet, causing tremendous suffering, death, and displacement.

The Humanitarian Dimensions of the Crisis

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Both sides committed grave human rights abuses during the second Congolese rebellion. Beginning in August 1998, an escalating cycle of retribution generated a maelstrom of violence. The first wave of persecution fell on the Tutsi minority. On August 2, Amnesty International received reports from Kinshasa of hundreds of arbitrary and unlawful arrests of members of the Tutsi ethnic group, people of Rwandan origin, those married to Rwandans, and others perceived as sympathetic to the rebellion. Many Tutsi in Kinshasa went into hiding. On August 7, Amnesty International issued a warning about the waves of arrests in Kinshasa, and also about the widespread killings in the far eastern Kivu region. One of the earliest massacres in the new conflict occurred in Uvira and Fizi in South Kivu, where the *Forces Armées Congolaises* (FAC, the government army) reportedly armed local youths, who in turn killed 250 Tutsis between on August 2 and 3.

The situation worsened on August 8, when a broadcast of the local *Radio Télévision Nationale Congolaise* (RNTC) affiliate in Bunia in the northeastern Ituri district called on the listeners to “jump on the people with long noses, who are tall and slim and want to dominate us [meaning the Tutsis]. . . . Wake up, be aware of our destiny so as to defeat the enemy.”¹ On August 12, this same radio station issued a call for Congolese people to kill the Tutsis throughout the Ituri district.² The government proceeded to use hate radio across the country to rally the population against the rebellion, accusing the government of Rwanda of invading the DRC territory.³ The radio campaign was effective, setting off a wave of killings against Tutsis in such cities as Kinshasa, Kisangani, and Lubumbashi. In Kisangani, at least 150 civilians from the Kivu region were killed by the FAC before the town was captured by the RCD on August 23. Senior DRC officials persisted in waging a media hate campaign against Tutsis and people of Rwandan origin in a manner

reminiscent of a similar campaign leading up to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda (the Rwandan case differed slightly in that the radio stations there were not state-owned). Another disturbing move by Kabila's government occurred on August 11 when it began to recruit child soldiers. Children and youth between twelve and twenty years of age were encouraged to enlist in the armed forces. Human Rights Watch called on Kabila to end this practice, one that he had used earlier in 1996 against Mobutu with the Kadogo.⁴ On August 14, 1998, UNICEF accused both the government and the rebels of using child soldiers. Kabila's forces reenlisted some 400 to 500 from centers near Kisangani and from the eastern town of Bukavu. These children had been demobilized after fighting with Mobutu and the ADFL rebel forces.⁵

In Kinshasa, several suspected rebels were burnt alive by mobs, and government troops performed summary executions on others, particularly in the districts of Masina, Kingasani, and Kimbaseke.⁶ Hundreds of Tutsis in the DRC capital were rounded up and detained in the Kokolo military camp, and hundreds more were held in undisclosed places. The hate propaganda encouraged ill-treatment and random killings because many potential perpetrators felt it signaled that the government would grant them immunity from prosecution.⁷ On August 13, 1998, Amnesty International publicly condemned those senior government officials who called upon civilians to take up arms to end what they called "the senseless adventure of the Rwandese in Congo."⁸ Human Rights Watch called on the DRC government to secure the safety of ethnic Tutsis who were in custody or living in government-controlled areas.⁹

By mid-August, pressure from Amnesty International forced the Congolese human rights minister, Leonard She Okitundu, to admit that the government was holding 800 Tutsis at the Kokolo camp.¹⁰ Many of the detainees were women and children, the majority civilians.¹¹ On August 19, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) began periodic visits to the Kokolo military camp, finding the conditions there horrific. The ICRC also visited the Makala prison in Kinshasa on September 14 and registered 111 detainees.¹² The DRC authorities claimed that they were detaining the Tutsis for their own safety, but persecution nonetheless continued. On August 28, the international media reported that Kinshasa residents were burning Tutsi rebels alive. According to Radio France Internationale (RFI), residents boasted, "We have burnt Tutsi here It was not the soldiers, it is we ourselves who burnt the Tutsi."¹³

Kinshasa residents intensified their hunt for potential rebels when loyalists soldiers reported that several hundred Tutsi rebels were still hiding in the Masina area, just five kilometers from the airport. The Banyamulenge political movement *Forces Républicaines Fédéralistes* (FRF) called on the international community, the UN, and the OAU

to stop Kabila's "genocide" against the Tutsis in the DRC. According to the FRF president, Joseph Mutambo, "innocent and defenseless people are massacred and thrown into the Congo River or in mass graves in Kinshasa, as well as in various provinces, notably in South Kivu and Katanga."¹⁴ On September 2, thirty vehicles transporting rebel prisoners arrived in Kinshasa.¹⁵ Amnesty International would later publish a report on November 23, 1998 solidifying the FRF claims. The organization had documented allegations of mass graves, containing as many as 500 bodies, near the capital. By the end of August, hundreds of unarmed civilians, most of them Tutsis and captured combatants, were shot dead, beaten, or burnt to death by government forces or their civilians supporters in Kinshasa. Women and girls were raped and subsequently killed.

Outside of Kinshasa, chaos and seemingly random violence across the DRC erupted within the first few weeks of the rebellion. Looting and armed robbery were common in the east, particularly in rebel-controlled Bukavu.¹⁶ In that eastern city, the rebels committed atrocities against residents during their house-by-house search in the "Essence" neighborhood in the process of allegedly looking for Mayi-Mayi infiltrators. Amnesty International also received reports of civilians massacred near Uvira, as well as summary executions of government soldiers at Kavumu, near Bukavu. Government forces in the east also did not hesitate to engage in mass killings. On August 19, 1998, the bodies of 150 Congolese Tutsi soldiers were discovered in Bunia. They had been massacred by retreating government forces. Similar killings occurred in several regions across the eastern DRC.¹⁷ Mass movement of refugees provided further evidence of the endemic violence. In North Kivu, according to aid organizations, hundreds of people, probably Congolese Tutsis, fled toward Goma from nearby Masisi.¹⁸

Rebel forces committed one of the most horrific massacres in the first month of the conflict. The human rights group *Comité d'Action pour le Développement* (CADI) charged that rebel soldiers and their Rwandan and Ugandan allies had committed grave human rights violations including arbitrary arrests, torture, extortion, and summary executions in South Kivu in August. Specifics included a report claiming that rebels, Rwandese, and Burundian government forces killed 648 people on August 23 and 24 in the Kasika area of South Kivu. Among the victims were thirty-seven people from a Roman Catholic mission, including a priest and three nuns.¹⁹ This rampage had been incited by the killing of fifty rebel combatants and Rwandan government troops by the Mayi-Mayi armed groups. In their fury, rebel troops and their allies stabbed a local traditional chief to death and carved out his heart with a knife. One pregnant woman had her stomach ripped open. Soldiers grabbed children by their feet and swung them against a wall, breaking their skulls. Many of the bodies were thrown into latrines. But CADI also accused

local authorities and residents of killing about 250 Banyamulenge in Uvira in the days prior to the town's capture by rebel forces in early August.²⁰ The cycle of retribution seemed unstoppable.

In the northeastern city of Kisangani, the butchering of civilians by government forces began immediately after Tutsi-led rebels launched the anti-Kabila revolt. Residents interviewed by Corinne Dufka of Reuters said that "there are several mass graves and people have told us, they saw many bodies thrown in the river. We think at least 100 people could have been killed in the weeks prior to the liberation of Kisangani."²¹ This killing occurred before the city fell to the rebels on August 23. On September 2, 1998, the FRF reported that the killing of the Tutsi was widespread in the DRC, noting that Banyamulenge were massacred in Kalemie and more than 100 were killed in the village of Vyura in the south near Moba. These massacres occurred on August 26 while the Banyamulenge fled government forces. Later in the fall, seventy-eight bodies of people killed in the Kalemie area by retreating Kabila forces were transferred to Uvira for burial.²² Banyamulenge sources also confirmed that eighty Tutsi were killed in Lubumbashi, where weapons had been distributed to the civilian population.

On September 10, 1998, rebel and Rwandan troops killed civilians and burnt houses in retaliation for attacks by the Mayi-Mayi and attacked isolated pockets of stranded government soldiers in and around Bukavu. Several local dignitaries were arrested and their whereabouts were not disclosed, creating fear among local people. Observers noted many armed robberies and rapes in Bukavu. Congolese refugees fleeing to Tanzania also reported killings of civilians near Uvira and Fizi.²³ In Kalemie, most of the civilians population had fled since the rebel takeover. Since the beginning of the hostilities, food had become scarce in the area, forcing 400 Congolese in Kalemie to relocate to the Tanzanian town of Kigoma, which by September was already housing 5,333 DRC refugees. At least 2,000 people had been killed by rebel forces in the Bukavu and Uvira areas in South Kivu between August 2 and September 15.

Within a few weeks of the start of the rebellion, the humanitarian situation in Province Orientale capital of Kisangani became increasingly fragile. Residents had been dependent on the city's food and drug stocks, which were almost depleted by mid-August. Prices of available food were beyond the purchasing power of most people.²⁴ According to UN diplomat Sergio Vieira de Mello, the rebel-held Kisangani—a town of 500,000 people—was completely cut off from its main commercial routes, and tensions ran high among the residents. Government troops were surrounding the town, making it difficult for humanitarian assistance to arrive. Not only were the 500,000 local residents at risk, but also an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 displaced people.²⁵ Vieira de Mello added that 10,000 to 12,000 Banyamulenge in South Kivu

were moving away from the fighting, possibly crossing the border into Rwanda.²⁶

By September 29, 1998, the economic life of Bukavu had come to a standstill, and food shortages were beginning to take their toll. Because most humanitarian organizations had left the area at the start of the crisis in August, refugees, internally displaced persons, and other vulnerable groups were abandoned. Frequent house-by-house searches by rebels terrorized residents. Military power in Bukavu rested in the hands of Rwandan and Ugandan officers, thus Congolese officials were incapable of intervening to prevent abuses.²⁷ And as the conflict spread westward from the Kivus into the Maniema province, so did the humanitarian disaster. In Kindu, the capital of Maniema, living conditions were becoming desperate. Heavy fighting between government and rebel forces in the city between October 5 and 12 had cut off the flow of even the most basic goods. At least 80 percent of the town's population fled into surrounding forests, where lack of food and poor sanitary conditions created a breeding ground for disease. Malaria, diarrhea, and communicable diseases ran rampant.

On November 2, the U.S. under-secretary for African affairs, Susan Rice, expressed her concern about the humanitarian and human rights situation in the DRC, emphasizing the rise of ethnic violence.²⁸ Roberto Garreton noted increasing detention and persecution along ethnic lines. In the east, an atmosphere of terror reigned, fueled by widespread violence, repression, and misery.²⁹ Food and medicine were increasingly scarce throughout the country.³⁰ Food shortages were reported in Lubumbashi on November 6, 1998.³¹ Basic foodstuffs became increasingly rare in the markets.³² Multiplying the misery caused by lack of food and other basic needs was the use of repression and terror by both sides of the conflict. On November 16, 1998, Amnesty International announced that in the DRC "every hour, a person is arrested, a person is illegally detained, a person is tortured, a person is raped."³³ A November 23 Amnesty International report noted that sexual violence was being used as a weapon of war by the combatants on both sides, often alongside the massacre of civilians. Combatants viewed it as a tool to spread terror among the population and to destabilize communities. The RCD began to use rape systematically as a weapon of war from the start of the conflict. In addition, sources reported that in October as many as twenty-four people were being abducted daily by the RCD.

Persecution of Tutsi continued throughout the fall and into the winter. Over thirty Tutsi of Rwandan background who had taken refuge in a religious center in Kinshasa were moved to the Kokolo military camp on January 12, 1999. These arrested people were paraded on television, inflaming anti-Tutsi sentiments further.³⁴ These feelings became so prevalent that the pro-government press accused Human Rights Minister

Leonard She Okitundu of being too “pro-Tutsi.” International observers feared that the *Comités de Pouvoir Populaire* (CPP, or People’s Power Committees) set up by Congolese officials after Kabila’s appeal for civilians to rise up against the “foreign invasion” were committing human rights violations.³⁵ On February 22, 1999, 150 Tutsis detained in the Kokolo camp were transferred to a new site, the location of which was kept secret. An estimated 1,000 to 2,000 Tutsis were said to have been detained in Kinshasa.³⁶ Roberto Garretton pushed Western countries to take action to help the Tutsis detained in Kinshasa by granting assistance including temporary asylum. The Canadian government offered to give visas to Tutsis willing to migrate.³⁷

News of another major massacre in the east surfaced on January 5, 1999. An estimated 500 civilians, many of them women and children, were killed by in the eastern DRC between December 30, 1998, and January 1, 1999. According to the Missionary International Service News Agency (MISNA), a Roman Catholic humanitarian information network, the massacre took place in the village of Makobola, about fifteen kilometers from Uvira. The attack appeared to be a reprisal for an attack by Mayi-Mayi soldiers, who had entered the Uvira region from Fizi and assaulted RCD positions near Makobola. In response, rebel reinforcements arrived from Uvira to Makobola and savaged the population while the Mayi-Mayi escaped into the surrounding forests.³⁸ On January 4, RCD head Ernest Wamba dia Wamba demanded an inquiry so that those responsible could be punished.³⁹ MISNA reported that the victims had been shot or macheted, and that Red Cross volunteers were allegedly among the victims. MISNA claimed that the rebel leader who carried out the massacre was a commander known as “Shetani,” or “Satan.” Most of the victims were women and children since the “men had gone into the bush to join the Mayi-Mayi rebels.” On January 4, 1999, the UN secretary general, Kofi Annan, released a statement condemning the Makobola massacre and noted the inquiry launched by the RCD leadership with approval.

On January 6, the RCD issued a statement that the people killed in Makobola were Burundian guerrillas rather than civilians. But MISNA strongly contradicted that statement, reconfirming that civilians had been the victims in Makobola. The same story was confirmed by Congolese refugees fleeing to Tanzania. Aside from the killings, rebel forces had also burned villages, causing many people to flee.⁴⁰ The DRC UN ambassador, André Mwanga Kapanga, called upon the UN to investigate the massacre.⁴¹ The U.S. State Department found the situation so outrageous that it demanded that Congolese rebels allow an independent inquiry.⁴² The Rwandan government rejected accusations that its troops participated in the massacre, stating that its troops were not in the area.⁴³ Later in January, humanitarian organizations tried to

reestablish a presence in many parts of the DRC that they had abandoned when fighting erupted in August. In Lubumbashi in Katanga, the World Food Program (WFP) was prepared to assist 6,000 Congo refugees and 40,000 displaced Angolans.⁴⁴ In the east, the UN prepared to set up a variety of aid office in the North Kivu capital of Goma.⁴⁵ An official visit by UN diplomat Roberto Garreton to the DRC was planned for February 16 to 23.

On March 15, MISNA reported that RCD rebels killed more than 100 people in the Kamituga area of South Kivu in a reprisal for a Mayi-Mayi militia attack on an RCD convoy heading to Kitutu from Kamituga. MISNA also noted that seventy-eight people, including seven women and two children, were killed during military operations at Lukweti, Rutshuru, and Biholo between February 28 and March 1.⁴⁶ Reports surfaced on March 24 that rebels killed 250 people in retaliation for Mayi-Mayi attacks in the Burhinyi and Ngweshe group of villages in South Kivu. The victims were mainly elderly men, women, and children killed during anti-Interhamwe “mop-up” operations carried out by RCD troops. Also in March, accusations emerged that Rwandans hired Mayi-Mayi militia to kill members of a dissident Banyamulenge faction on the eastern frontier, leaving roughly 100 civilians dead.⁴⁷ Reports of the killing of 100 civilians in Magunga, near Baraka in South Kivu, also circulated.⁴⁸ The civilian population of Kisangani also found themselves in a precarious position. On June 16, 1999, the human rights group *Justice et Libération* reported that sporadic fighting had broken out between two rebel factions, RCD-Goma and RCD-Kisangani, dividing the city. The split had occurred when Ernest Wamba dia Wamba broke off from the rest of the RCD due to his conflict with former Mobutists within the organization. The split caused rising ethnic hatreds and many arrests and politically motivated intimidation, leaving the population hostage to the two factions.⁴⁹

Throughout the fall of 1998 and spring of 1999, both sides targeted journalists, human rights activists, and political protesters with killings, beatings, and extralegal incarceration. Both sides attempted to keep tight control over information about atrocities, using intimidation to prevent human rights activists from disseminating reports. Beginning in August 1998, rebels confiscated communication equipment from the general population and human rights organizations.⁵⁰ On September 1, rebel forces looted the UNICEF offices in Uvira, Goma, and Kisangani. UNICEF vehicles were stolen in Province Orientale town of Boma.⁵¹ On November 30 in Bukavu, rebels violently intimidated a group of human rights activists. In March 1999, government authorities arrested Baudouin Hamuli Kabarhuza, president of the National Council of Non-governmental Organizations of the DRC (known as CNONGD). When he returned from a conference in South Africa, government officials

accused him of collaborating with the enemy.⁵² On April 15, 1999, it was announced that he had been released, and the following day, demonstrations against DRC authorities erupted in Kinshasa. Protesters were angered by civil rights abuses, but even more so about gasoline price hikes and corresponding rises in transportation costs. Many of the protesters were arrested and faced charges in clandestine trials held in military courts. On May 17, at least fifteen of these “criminals” were found guilty of murder and were executed. On May 18, the Congolese human rights organization ASADHO denounced the violence and social disintegration under Kabila’s regime, stating that the two years of his government were no better than the thirty years of Mobutu.⁵³ On May 19, Amnesty International stated that forty-six people had been executed since the wave of repression began in April. Even Etienne Mbaya, a former minister of reconstruction and planning, was arrested on June 2 and jailed in the Kokolo military camp. He had been a member of the government until May 1998, ousted on account of accusations of corruption. Also in June, government security forces arrested the journalist Godefroid Kyangwe Muleya in Lubumbashi. He was the editor of the local newspaper *Mukuba*. Overall, repression of human rights leaders, journalists, and regular civilians across the DRC compounded the misery caused by food shortages and widespread unemployment.⁵⁴

REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

The outbreak of rebellion caused massive displacement of populations throughout the DRC. The movement began on August 2 when Rwandan authorities registered 600 new Congolese arrivals fleeing the fighting in Uvira.⁵⁵ Around the same time, 104 Congolese registered in the Rwandan city of Cyangugu, across the Ruzizi River from Bukavu, and were taken to the remote Nyagarare camp. The new violence also marked the suspension of the repatriation of Congolese refugees to Uvira and Baraka from the Tanzanian town of Kigoma, across Lake Tanganyika. This group had fled to Tanzania during the ADFL war to topple the Mobutu regime. Until August 2, 53,000 DRC refugees had been repatriated by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR).⁵⁶ With the renewal of the fighting, this movement was reversed as large numbers of Congolese now attempted to cross Lake Tanganyika. As of August 7, 180 Congolese had arrived in the Kigoma. As the war intensified between rebels and loyalists forces in South Kivu, 927 Congolese arrived in Western Tanzania where they were registered by the UNHCR and taken to the camps on August 22.⁵⁷ The flow of refugees kept increasing.

By September 7, the western Tanzanian towns of Kigoma and Kasulu were overwhelmed with refugees; in Kigoma alone, 3,628 Congolese were counted. The UNHCR began to set up emergency response

infrastructures in the Kigoma and Nyagarusu camps in Kasulu district northeast of Kigoma. During that first week of September, the number of refugees crossing over to Tanzania declined slightly, only because people were being prevented from moving out of the DRC by blockades at exit points and by the scarcity of boats making the journey across Lake Tanganyika.⁵⁸ As instability continued in the Bukavu area, Congolese refugees continued to flee from South Kivu to Tanzania. By September 10, the flow of refugees into the Kigoma area picked up again. These arrivals were first settled at the Kibirizi receiving center in Kigoma, where they were registered and later transferred to other camps outside of Kigoma. Many were shipped to the Nyarugusu camp in the Kasulu district managed by the NGO World Vision. By September 10, it housed more than 30,000 refugees, many of them from Burundi. Camp officials geared up to eventually accommodate 250,000 people. As the fighting slowly moved south to the Katanga province, refugees moved eastward to Kalemie, where they crossed the lake over to Tanzania as well. According to Agence France Presse (AFP), 100 DRC soldiers and 398 Congolese leaving Kalemie arrived in Kigoma, bringing the total number of Congolese arrivals to 5,333 by September 16.

The intensification of the fighting between rebels and *Mayi-Mayi* forced 183 refugees, mainly women and children, out of Fizi and Baraka in South Kivu; this group arrived in Kigoma on September 23.⁵⁹ On September 30, 328 Congolese refugees arrived in Kigoma. The new arrivals included 117 people who said they had fled the fighting between DRC rebels and government forces in the Kalemie and Kabimba area of Katanga. Around that time, another 211 refugees arrived from Fizi and Uvira areas in South Kivu, bringing the total number of Congolese refugees in Kigoma to 8,530.⁶⁰ That number reached 11,000 in Kigoma by October 13. As the fighting continued in South Kivu and in Katanga, the number of refugees continued to grow (with 1,000 arriving between October 8 and 11) and reached a total of 11,289 Congolese, the biggest portion coming from the Kalemie region.⁶¹ On October 23, 1998, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) provided a new assessment of population movement from the DRC since the beginning of September 1998, stating that there were 12,296 Congolese in Kigoma as of October 18. Toward the end of October, the Congolese who for weeks had been trapped on the Ubwari peninsula in hopes of crossing into Tanzania were starting to return to their home areas in South Kivu.⁶² Nonetheless, refugees from others areas continued to flee to Tanzania. As of November 12, 1998, more than 14,000 Congolese from Uvira, Baraka, and Fizi crossed Lake Tanganyika to Kigoma since August 2, 1998.

During the last two weeks of November, with the progression of fighting in the Katanga province, even more refugees from the eastern

Congo were fleeing by boat, with several hundred of them landing in Tanzania's Rukwa region, south of Kigoma. Fighting between rebel and government forces, as well as the fear of being pressed into military service, drove increasingly greater numbers of people out of the DRC. The UNHCR decided to transfer 1,200 of these refugees from the Rukwa region north to Kigoma, where 15,000 Congolese were already encamped, so the possibility of opening up a new refugee site in Rukwa was considered. By the end of November 1998, the number of DRC refugees in Tanzania reached 18,000 people.⁶³ Into the new year, the rate of arrival continued to increase. As of January 22, the official count stood at 26,199 Congolese refugees in Tanzania. UNHCR and the NGO Caritas used three boats to collect new arrivals from the Tanzania side of Lake Tanganyika. At this time, refugees were transported daily from the transit center in Kigoma to a camp at Lugufu.⁶⁴

The situation became so dramatic in the Congo that on January 27 thousands of DRC refugees who had been repatriated from Tanzania after the overthrow of Mobutu began to stream back into Tanzania barely one year after their repatriation, with about 800 arriving in Kigoma daily. At this rate, the IFRC and Red Crescent estimated that one of their camps run specifically for Congolese refugees could be filled to its 40,000 capacity within a month. The IFRC noted that more refugees were waiting to cross into Tanzania and that thousands who could not afford the crossing price of \$10 a head charged by private boats continued to be stranded in the bush.⁶⁵ As the rebels consolidated their gains in South Kivu, the tidal wave of refugees receded suddenly by January 29, 1999. From an average of 800 to 1,000 refugees a day in November and December, the figure dropped to 100 per day on January 30 and 31. Late January refugees told UNHCR officials that rebels controlled most of the Ubwari peninsula, including the eastern portion from which most of the Congolese have been departing for Tanzania. Rebels were then patrolling the coast of Lake Tanganyika to curb the number of departures.

Yet this brief lull did not last long. In February, the fighting between *Mayi-Mayi* and rebels intensified, with houses intentionally burnt, civilians detained, and large numbers uprooted from their homes, commencing a new influx of Congolese refugees into Tanzania.⁶⁶ The majority of the early February refugees were Bembe people from the Fizi region. Coming through Kigoma, they were transported to Lugufu, where they were provided protection and shelter.⁶⁷ In early March, another 2,000 refugees crossed into Lake Tanganyika to Kigoma, fleeing from the Fizi and Uvira areas. They reported that forces loyal to President Kabila had entered the Kindu region in the Maniema province, where they had seized a rebel base after intense fighting. *Mayi-Mayi* clashes with rebels had also escalated in the Fizi region. Within this group of 2,000, 200 had fled from Kalemie on account of bombing by loyalists.⁶⁸ As of March 12,

1999, the number of registered refugees who had crossed into Tanzania since August reached 42,283,⁶⁹ increasing to 48,624 by April 14.⁷⁰

Tanzania was not the only destination for Congolese refugees. Five days after the beginning of the rebellion, on August 7, 1998, 400 Congolese crossed into the Cibitoke province of northwestern Burundi, fleeing the fighting between the rebel and loyalist forces in Uvira and Bukavu.⁷¹ All international aid workers too were evacuated from the eastern DRC at this time. By August 18, 3,000 refugees from the Congo crossed into northern Burundi from the same area.⁷² By August 25, 1998, 2,700 refugees had been placed in shelters in Burundi. Throughout this period, the Cibitoke region received an average of 50 arrivals per day. As of September 2, 1998, approximately 4,364 people had crossed into Cibitoke from eastern DRC. Within the period of September 14–20, the total increased to 7,159. Among these were 2,516 Burundian refugees returning home. This group had previously fled Burundi because of the civil war in that country between the Hutu *Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie* (FDD) and the Tutsi-dominated Burundian army.

Uganda also received a large number of refugees from the DRC. According to a UNHCR mission in Uganda, in the first week of the rebellion as fighting intensified in North Kivu and the northeastern DRC, a group of nearly 3,000 Congolese fled from the Rutshuru district in the eastern DRC into the southwestern Uganda. They entered Uganda at Kisoro and were then moved to the Kyangwali refugee settlement near Lake Albert. By December 22, this camp hosted around 3,400 Congolese refugees, while a further 3,000 were distributed between in the Kyaka II and Niakiavale settlements. The Ugandans became so concerned about being overwhelmed with refugees that roughly 2,000 DRC refugees were refused entry by local authorities during the first days of January.⁷³ A report on January 4, 1999 confirmed that this group had been prevented from moving into refugee camps by Ugandan troops. Quick intervention of the UNHCR convinced authorities to grant permission to enter Uganda to the refugees, who were then taken to the Kyangwali camp. Both Uganda and Rwanda backed the rebels looking to overthrow Kabila.⁷⁴

Many Congolese refugees also fled toward Zambia. When the rebellion commenced on August 2, the Zambian border was closed. A small trickle made it across, the number fewer than twenty.⁷⁵ But with the intensification of the fighting in the DRC, the UN and NGOs started to prepare a contingency plan for a possible influx of 10,000 to 50,000 refugees from the DRC into Zambia. Yet the number of refugees crossing into Zambia remained low until mid-October. As the rebels advanced south, capturing such towns as Kindu, Kalemie, and Moba, the people began to pour across the border. On October 12, there were reports that a huge number of refugees was moving toward Zambia following the

fighting at Kindu, the last government stronghold in the eastern DRC, so the UNHCR in Zambia prepared to receive them.⁷⁶ On November 26, fighting around Congolese towns of Pweto and Pepa near the Zambian border began uprooting many people in the southeastern DRC. About 200 refugees made their way into Zambia, settling mainly in Luapula in the northern part of the country.⁷⁷ Congolese began heading for Zambia from a variety of different points within the DRC. Some came from Moba in the northeastern Katanga, about 150 kilometers north of the Zambian border along the shore of Lake Tanganyika, as the rebels closed in on that town in November. Many were arriving by train from even further north.⁷⁸ Some 4,000 refugees from the Katanga province arrived in northern Zambia by early December 1998.

On March 16, the UNHCR reported that its officials in northern Zambia were bracing for the arrival of more refugees as fighting continued between rebels and DRC forces near the town of Pweto and Pepa. On that day, 900 arrivals were registered at the town of Kalanda, and 900 more entered Zambia through other points.⁷⁹ The UNHCR on March 19 estimated the number of DRC refugees in Zambia to have reached 10,000 since the beginning of the renewed fighting in Pweto and Pepa, with some coming from as far away as Kalemie. By March 26, the WFP estimated that the number hit 12,000. The Zambian government allocated land to accommodate these new arrivals at Mwembe, near the older camp at Mporokoso.⁸⁰ Although most Congolese crossed the eastern and southeastern frontiers, some also crossed the Congo River to find refuge in Congo-Brazzaville. According to the UNHCR, about 100 refugees had arrived in Congo-Brazzaville as of August 23. Some of them settled in Pointe-Noire, and the UNHCR staff established a shelter outside Brazzaville for 150 new arrivals.⁸¹ A small number continued to flee into Congo-Brazzaville from the southwestern DRC and Kinshasa throughout the conflict. Refugees fleeing the fighting in the Equateur province faced even grimmer circumstances. Beginning on January 2, 1999, some 5,000 terrified Congolese refugees, mostly women and children, gathered in the DRC town of Zongo to cross the Ubangi River by boat to seek safety in the CAR's capital of Bangui. Gunfire had erupted in and around Zongo, and the refugees feared it was about to fall in rebel hands, causing a mad rush across the river.⁸²

All the Congolese living in the affected regions did not necessarily cross borders to other countries; an enormous amount of people—though harder to quantify—had been internally displaced. For example, a sizable number from the southern and eastern outskirts of Kinshasa converged on the city center by August 20. The battle to control the airport between loyalist forces and Tutsi infiltrators had prompted these movements. But slowly, by the end of August, some of them began to return to their homes.⁸³ The numbers were much greater in the eastern

and southeastern parts of the DRC. Teams of humanitarian workers who had been traveling through the rebel-held eastern section of the DRC during the first month of the conflict estimated that some 20,000 to 25,000 people had been displaced in the Goma area with another 12,000 in the vicinity of Uvira. In the two Kivus and in the eastern DRC, there were around 118,000 displaced people, including those who had resettled there in 1993. On September 30, the RCD was seeking international support to help resettle thousands of displaced people who had come to the Ruzizi plain in South Kivu. The RCD estimated that government military actions in Katanga had displaced up to 20,000 mainly ethnic Tutsi-Banyamulenge from the Vyura area to the vicinity of rebel-held Kalemie. From the Katangan city of Kalemie many of these refugees were then pushed northward into South Kivu.

The displaced groups were by no means all Tutsi. Families of different ethnic groups from villages in various areas of South Kivu, including Fizi, Kabare, Mwenga, and Walungu, had fled to the eastern frontier cities of Goma, Bukavu, and Uvira.⁸⁴ On October 30, 1998, the AFP reported that local authorities in Goma had requested assistance for 31,750 people, most of whom had lost their homes. Humanitarian sources said that the people who had arrived in Goma mainly came from the Masisi and Walikale areas, west of Goma within North Kivu. Many of the displaced in Goma were integrated into local families.⁸⁵ By January 22, 1999, 235,000 civilians were displaced in North and South Kivu provinces. In North Kivu, the number was about 110,000, while in South Kivu it was about 125,000. Some of the displaced were “chronic” cases, but a significant number had been displaced only since early August when rebels backed by Rwanda and Uganda launched the revolt against Kabila. According to RCD leader Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, “The two Kivus are probably the richest provinces in the country, but people are hungry. . . . Hundreds of thousands of cattle have been looted or killed and farms have been left unattended.” He blamed the rampant insecurity in North and South Kivu on marauding bands of militia. Aid workers said hospitals in Rutshuru, around seventy kilometers north of Goma, were filled with wounded, apparently victims of widespread banditry.

As of February 3, 1999, there were 500,000 internally displaced throughout the DRC, with about 190,000 in North and South Kivu.⁸⁶ UN observers noted that instability throughout the eastern DRC had led to a fresh wave of population displacements, having a tremendously negative impact on food security in the area.⁸⁷ While some refugees were crossing into Tanzania and Zambia, many more continued to be internally displaced within the DRC. Throughout the spring of 1999, the situation in the eastern DRC remained highly unstable. The WFP continued to assist malnourished displaced persons in Goma and Bukavu.⁸⁸ By June 22, the total number of internally displaced people in the DRC

had escalated to 660,000, with more than half of this number distributed between South Kivu and Katanga.⁸⁹ Around June 23, renewed fighting erupted in parts of South Kivu and the Katanga province, resulting in more civilian displacement. Shortly thereafter, some 70,000 newly displaced were reported in Uvira, Kaliba, and the Lulingu areas of the Ruzizi plain.

Katanga also had a significant problem with displaced people. On October 20, 1998, 800 internally displaced people coming from the Kalemie, Nyunzu, and Nyemba areas were moving toward Lubumbashi. Local authorities identified 20,000 to 40,000 displaced people around Kabalo, Nyunzu, Nyemba, Manono, and Ankoro.⁹⁰ On December 4, Lubumbashi was reported to be hosting about 6,000 displaced persons and the influx was said to be continuing. They were staying at two sites there, receiving food and medical assistance from ICRC and MSF-Belgium. The rest were living with local families. Further north in Katanga, 8,000 people fled recent fighting in Manono in June, arriving in the Malemba-Nkulu area of Katanga. Some residents of Malemba-Nkulu and Kinkodja were reported to have fled in panic as a result of the influx and were heading toward Lubumbashi.⁹¹ Returning displaced persons to their home communities in Northern Katanga was becoming increasingly problematic due to continued conflict and the presence of land mines.⁹² In the spring of 1999, the situation was becoming grim in the northwest of Katanga in the Kasai Oriental province as well. In the town of Lusambo, civilians fled into surrounding forests due to fighting between rebels and Kinshasa-allied forces. Less than 10,000 returned to Lusambo after it was captured by the rebels on June 7, 1999. The displaced were in dire need of food and drugs, but no aid agencies were operating in the area.⁹³

ECONOMIC, HEALTH, AND FOOD CRISES

As detailed in chapter 1, living conditions in Kinshasa became increasingly dire in the days following the outbreak of the rebellion in August 1998. Electricity had been cut off by the insurgents who had seized the Inga power station, which supplies Kinshasa, Brazzaville across the river in the Republic of Congo, as well as the copper-mining centers of Katanga. This cessation of power resulted in widespread disruption of industrial and commercial activities, including the distribution of food. Without electric power, pumping of drinking water ceased, as did many sanitation services. To address this issue, an ICRC tanker truck delivered potable water on a regular basis to various neighborhoods, and in addition sizable water tanks were installed in the 2,000-bed general hospital in Kinshasa and at the Kokolo and CETA military hospitals. The capacity of the general hospital was brought up to 59,000 liters,

with special hygienic tanks providing the needs of surgical and maternity wards. Toward the end of August, rehabilitation work commenced on septic tank facilities as well. Making the sanitary conditions worse was the presence of hundreds of unclaimed or hastily buried bodies scattered throughout the city. Hundreds of corpses of summary execution victims remained mostly uncovered, laying where they had been killed.

Many residents of the Kinshasa suburbs of Masina and Kimbanseke near the international airport returned home.⁹⁴ But at the beginning of September, Ibrahim Jaba, head of UNICEF, said that the city of Kinshasa had only four days of food stocks and one week of water treatment chemicals. On September 2, 1998, a UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report stated that food shortages throughout the southwestern DRC arose during the short period the region was in rebel hands. During this period, the country's access to Atlantic shipping was cut off, causing prices of imported commodities, including foodstuffs, in Kinshasa and other urban centers to rise sharply, seriously reducing the ability of the urban poor to feed themselves. Despite these difficulties, conditions did improve slightly for the people of Kinshasa in early September since they were at last able to move around freely, electric power was restored, and the night curfew decreed at the beginning of the uprising was scaled back. Trucks began hauling goods into Kinshasa via the road from Matadi, and Kinshasa was reopened, although under armed escort. Transportation links between Kinshasa and Brazzaville by water were reestablished, allowing the WFP to ferry 190 tons of food into the DRC capital.

Despite these encouraging signs, the threat of food shortages still hung over Kinshasa. Food importers who supplied Kinshasa with at least 75 percent of its basic needs told Reuters that their depots were empty due to the closure of the rail corridor to the main seaport of Matadi. Orgaman, the biggest food importer in Kinshasa, announced that it had four ships waiting to offload at Matadi 560 tons of fish, frozen meat, and poultry. Local newspapers reported that depots were almost empty of rice, salt, wheat, sugar, and other commodities, and that prices for such commodities had quadrupled.⁹⁵ On September 10, 1998, the WFP orchestrated the first airlift of food relief into Kinshasa since fighting broke out in August. Employing a C-130 Hercules cargo plane, the organization delivered twenty tons of maize from Pointe-Noire.⁹⁶ The day before, the ICRC announced plans to charter two aircrafts from Kenya to relay supplies into the Congolese capital. In addition to emergency medical supplies, the planes would carry several tons of chlorine for water treatment.⁹⁷

On September 11, 1998, the French government announced that its aircraft would fly 34 tons of food, along with medical kits and electricity generators, to Kinshasa. The Dutch government too joined the

airlift, sending a DC-10 aircraft with more medicine and water treatment chemicals.⁹⁸ The WFP continued with the airlift of food from Pointe-Noire into Kinshasa through September 18, when port activities resumed in Matadi and the highway between that port and Kinshasa reopened.⁹⁹ On September 21, the WFP reported that it had begun distributing emergency food in reaction to the dramatic increase in the number of severely malnourished children coming to local feeding centers. This round of distribution provided enough food for three meals a day for one week for 10,000 malnourished people in the district east of the capital, where heavy fighting had occurred three weeks before. During the clashes, small-scale farmers in Mikondo, Kimbanseke, Masina, and Ndjili completely lost their livelihood. As a result, WFP continued to route relief supplies into the capital, docking in Kinshasa a barge with 358 tons of food on September 21, 1998. The WFP also continued flying in supplies from Congo-Brazzaville using a C-130 Hercules cargo plane on loan from the Belgian government, airlifting more than 178 tons of food from Pointe-Noire by September 21, and planned to renew its stockpiles in Pointe-Noire by shipping in 3,500 tons of food by sea.¹⁰⁰

By October 6, 1998, observers noted that the food situation in Kinshasa appeared to be improving relative to the crisis situation in mid-September. Markets had begun to operate with some semblance of normalcy as shipments from the Matadi port resumed, but food items originating from the east, such as palm oil, beans, and maize, remained in short supply. Many families remained in a precarious position in getting their basic needs met.¹⁰¹ Increasing unemployment and the ensuing decrease in purchasing power left many families unable to provide proper nutrition for their children.¹⁰²

By December 3, food aid distribution came to a halt in Kinshasa as emergency food stocks were depleted. Only sixteen metric tons of food had been distributed in Kinshasa over the previous week. The WFP's emergency operations in the city estimated about 120,000 people at risk. To replenish its supplies, the WFP planned to bring in food by barge from neighboring Congo-Brazzaville, but malnourishment continued to be a severe problem in the city. In December 1998, 145 children were reported to have died from malnutrition in and around Kinshasa, with the monthly average hovering around 100 deaths through February.¹⁰³ On March 29, 1999, the FAO issued a warning that the provinces that had traditionally provided Kinshasa with agricultural food supplies were being overexploited to the point where they were nearly depleted. Although the immediate military situation had improved, more long-term factors harming Kinshasa's food supply began to emerge. The war had disrupted the 1998–1999 growing season in the Bas-Congo province, creating a greater reliance on imports from Brazzaville. The Bandundu province,

the only area supplying food for Kinshasa's population that remained at full agricultural production, was now also meeting demands from the two Kasai provinces. It remained unclear how long the Bandundu farmers would be able to send significant quantities of foodstuffs to the capital.

The humanitarian situation was perhaps equally disastrous in the eastern part of the country. Natural conditions before the conflict broke out may also have played a role in undermining the food security situation in the country. El Niño-related heavy rains and severe flooding during the 1997–1998 growing season caused extensive damage to crops and infrastructure. Farming households were thus unable to take full advantage of the favorable weather conditions during the end of the second 1998 growing season since they were still recovering from the earlier difficulties. Responding to this situation, the FAO planned to distribute seeds and hoes to farmers in the Kivus ahead of the late 1998–1999 growing season. The organization succeeded in distributing ninety-seven tons of bean seeds through NGOs in the Kabare, Walungu, and Mwenga areas, near Bukavu, along with nineteen metric tons of peanuts, twenty tons of bean seeds, and 570 kilograms of vegetable seeds. They also managed to disseminate 20,000 hoes throughout Rutshuru, Masisi, and Goma areas in North Kivu. Early in the conflict, the FAO had warned that population displacements and interruption of farming activities resulting from the conflict would create severe food shortages in the coming months.¹⁰⁴

On August 10, 1998, MSF staff members were evacuated from Goma, Bukavu, and Kisangani, leaving almost no one to administer any form of medical care. Because of the inherent insecurity, they felt that they could no longer provide relief in an effective way.¹⁰⁵ Armed men had seized more than 800 metric tons of food aid as well as several vehicles and communication equipment from relief organizations. In Uvira, looters carried away 426 metric tons of food aid in the early weeks of the conflict. In Bukavu, men in uniform confiscated 400 tons of food aid from the WFP warehouse and commandeered three WFP vehicles.

In December 1998, the food crisis in Kisangani became critical. The local economy had collapsed because of interruption of supply routes, with prices for basic items increasing exponentially. Health centers were burdened with many cases of malnutrition. The city also lacked the chemicals needed to treat the water supply. There were, however, some signs of improvement. The security situation had become calm, and markets had reopened, although basic foodstuffs remained very expensive.¹⁰⁶ On January 6, 1999, flooding around the rebel-held city left it without electricity for several days. Markets had food, but the local population's general inability to afford it kept many people hungry.¹⁰⁷ Southeast of Province Orientale in South Kivu, a humanitarian organization reported

on December 8 that there were 125,000 vulnerable people, the large majority of whom were displaced, requiring urgent food assistance.

Aside from problems with food supplies, South Kivu was experiencing a cholera epidemic that had begun before the conflict but was raging out of control due to the lack of drugs and functioning treatment facilities caused by the war. Particularly hard hit was the Shabunda region near the provincial border with North Kivu. In early October, six of Shabunda's twenty-six sub-districts as well as over eighty new cases and thirty cholera-related deaths were reported in treatment centers alone. As Shabunda had been bombed, much of the civilians population fled into the forest where there was a total lack of proper sanitary facilities and drinking water. Major cholera outbreaks with high mortality rates were also reported in Mwenga, Walungu, and other areas of South Kivu.¹⁰⁸ Another cholera epidemic ripped through the Nyankunde region of eastern Province Orientale near Bunia, causing twenty-two deaths among 120 cases registered by the end of September. Some anti-choleric drugs were available in the region, but the lack of transportation and overall instability made it difficult for sick people to reach medical centers. Remarkably, Bunia itself did not report any cases of the disease.¹⁰⁹ In South Kivu, the cholera epidemic continued to rage, with a total of 16,396 cholera cases registered between January 1 and November 1, 1998. Among these, 1,290 patients had died since the beginning of the war in August, the most affected regions being Shabunda, Mwenga, Uvira, Katana, Bukavu, Baraka, and Nundu.¹¹⁰

The medical NGO MSF attempted to maintain its activities in the DRC as best as it could through the course of the conflict. On October 23, 1998, MSF instituted comprehensive STD/AIDS programs in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi in hopes of making blood transfusions as safe as possible. Teams were also involved in a sleeping sickness treatment program in the Bas-Congo and Equateur provinces. It also began to construct a nationwide epidemiological surveillance system and waterborne disease prevention program, starting in the Kasai Oriental province. Since July 1997, MSF had responded to one meningitis emergency in Tembo in the Bandundu province, and eight cholera outbreaks in Bas-Congo, Bukavu, Bunia, Katanga, and Kisangani. A cholera treatment center was set up in Kisangani outside a closed military camp.¹¹¹ On November 13, 1998, there were reports of an epidemic of meningitis in Kananga in the Kasai Occidental province. Starting on September 8, the measures taken brought the disease under control by the beginning of November, ultimately overseeing 178 cases and 77 deaths. A monitoring team was set up and vaccinations administered to the at-risk population to prevent any further spread of the disease.¹¹²

Around Uvira in South Kivu, 11,000 displaced people from Vyura and Kalemie in Katanga were living in abandoned school and factory

buildings in extremely poor conditions; displaced people from other regions also had amassed there.¹¹³ In early January 1999, the cholera epidemic was still severe in South Kivu, mainly in the regions of Shabunda, Mwenga, and Nundu. By December 24, 19,097 cases had been diagnosed, with 1,578 deaths. But NGOs managed to bring in some medicine to treat the disease, and medical assistants were starting to be trained throughout the whole province. But as of February 11, 1999, there was still no humanitarian airlift into eastern DRC. The NGO Medical Emergency Relief International (MERLIN) assisted in the reestablishment of health facilities in the Maniema province cities of Kalima, Kindu, Punia, and Kampene. Throughout Maniema, 505,000 people had been left without access to health centers during the fall of 1998.¹¹⁴ A report on February 17, 1999 noted that the malnutrition rate among children in Kisangani was still alarmingly high, so MERLIN helped set up two food assistance stations there.¹¹⁵ On March 9, 1999, MERLIN announced the establishment in Maniema of twenty-five health centers equipped with essential drugs and emergency health kits that included dressing and vaccinations equipment. MERLIN also sought to rehabilitate three hospitals and ten health centers in Bas-Congo.¹¹⁶

During the conflict, in addition to meningitis and cholera, authorities had to deal with a virulent outbreak of measles in the eastern DRC, which prompted the ICRC to launch a campaign to vaccinate 80,000 children against that disease. In the Katana health zone, some 1,400 youngsters had died of measles in a six-month period ending in February. The campaign focused on both the Katana and Kabare health zones in South Kivu.¹¹⁷ On March 31, 1999, three DRC refugees in the Kaputa area of Zambia were reported to have died of some sort of communicable disease, raising anxieties about an epidemic.¹¹⁸ On April 27, 1999, Oxfam in Shabunda in South Kivu implemented a cholera control and prevention program that involved capping eight springs, creating six way stations, and building a well-water distribution system. Oxfam also supported the local health services in running health promotion workshops and distributing soap and other household hygiene items to 1,000 families.¹¹⁹

One of the most alarming disease issues to emerge during the crisis came to light with a report issued on April 30, 1999 of an outbreak of acute hemorrhagic fever syndrome in Durba, a settlement in the Watsa zone of Province Orientale in northeastern DRC. Early symptoms included fever, headache, and lassitude, followed by the more severe effects of gastrointestinal bleeding and coughing up blood. The first cases were believed to have occurred in January 1999. Between January and April 28, fifty cases resulting in forty-six deaths occurred in the gold-mining community at Durba. The WHO office in the DRC sent a team to investigate, suspecting the Ebola virus.¹²⁰ Four more deaths occurred by May 2, raising the death toll to 50, but the exact identity

of the disease was not yet known.¹²¹ On the southern border, Zambian authorities decided to screen refugees entering the country for Ebola.¹²² Back north in Province Orientale, the MSF claimed that most of the victims were men between thirty and fifty years of age who had been working illegally in the Kilomoto gold mines. Work conditions were very harsh with gold miners sometimes working at the bottom of the pit for forty-eight hours in appallingly unsanitary conditions.¹²³ On May 6, 1999, the WHO appealed to warring parties in the DRC to allow medical teams to reach areas affected by an outbreak of the hemorrhagic fever.¹²⁴ When they did arrive, the blood tests they conducted on the victims proved that the disease was caused not by the Ebola virus, but by the equally fatal Marburg virus.¹²⁵ By May 14, the fever outbreak at Watsa was brought under control. Cholera proved harder to prevent. On May 13, 1999, the Zambian health minister announced that an epidemic had exploded in the refugee encampments at Kaputa and that many patients were seeking treatment at health centers. Authorities carefully monitored movement in and out of the area.¹²⁶ On June 23, another cholera epidemic broke out in Kitshanga, seventy-two kilometers north of Goma, causing eleven deaths among the 208 registered cases. Bunia had also been badly affected by cholera, prompting the launch of a project to treat that city's water.¹²⁷

The war devastated the DRC's health situation and had a similar effect on the country's economy as well. A December 2, 1998 report from Kisangani noted that many major entrepreneurs closed their businesses or laid off employees, creating a rise in unemployment and a slump in buying power in that city. The timber companies La Forestière and Amexbois ceased operation, while the textile company Sotexki reduced its workforce from 800 to 292. Shortages and inflation made basic products such as soap and flour highly expensive. Even though schools reopened on October 19, many families could not pay the required fees.¹²⁸ Also in October, the DRC government canceled its plans to set up a state monopoly for gold and diamond trading. The governor of the central bank, Jean-Claude Masangu, pronounced, "The free market principle regarding the sale and purchase of precious materials will be maintained." In the previous month, the government had announced the creation of the *Service d'achat de substances minérales précieuses* (SASMIP), a central precious material trading office that would strengthen government control over gold and diamond trade.¹²⁹ In Kinshasa, Masangu announced that the central bank would stop printing money in an attempt to stop the slide of the Congolese franc. According to Masangu, the value of the franc had fallen by 64 percent since August on account of the war's effects, while the inflation rate continued to climb. The Congolese franc had been introduced by the Kabila government on June 30, 1998 to replace the old Zairian currency.

On November 9, 1998, the failing state-owned mining company Gecamines announced that it had signed a cooperation agreement with the Ridgepointe Central Mining group of Zimbabwe. The two companies would join together to exploit cobalt, copper, and other minerals in the DRC. The chief executive of Ridgepointe was named by DRC authorities as head of a “recovery committee” for Gecamines. Billy Rautenbach, a Zimbabwean industrialist, was to be responsible for technical and financial services in this attempt to revivify Gecamines. The managing director of the Congolese company was sacked after it was revealed that he had signed a contract with Ridgepointe. A week earlier Zimbabwe and the DRC had signed a cooperation agreement focusing on scientific, technical, and economic fields, with Kabila and Mugabe being present at the signing in Lubumbashi.¹³⁰ On November 25, 1998, the *Financial Times* reported that investor enthusiasm for the exploitation of the DRC’s vast mineral wealth was waning amid concerns over the longevity of Kabila’s government and its tendency to renege on mining licenses it had granted. A beleaguered and increasingly erratic Kabila undermined business confidence in his regime. The London-based trade publication *Metal Bulletin* published a commentary on November 12 noting that the appointment of the Zimbabwean entrepreneur Billy Rautenbach as the head of Gecamines raised eyebrows in mining circles since he was better known as a car and truck manufacturer. Gecamines was reputed to have made a spate of “shady deals” with Zimbabwean businessmen, which were widely seen as payoff by Kinshasa for Harare’s military support.¹³¹ Overall, the war combined with Kabila’s policies created a severe cash flow problem and shrinking economic activity. On March 2, 1999, a published report noted that the Canadian company Tenke Mining Corporation threatened to withdraw from its multimillion-dollar contract to exploit copper and cobalt deposits in the DRC. Tenke invoked the legal concept of *force majeure*—which allows parties to break contracts due to unforeseen circumstances such as war—in breaking its contract. Tenke held 55 percent of the investment, while the DRC government held the remaining 45 percent. The interruption of electricity to Katanga had stalled Tenke’s exploitation effort in Fungurume at the end of the year.¹³²

On April 9, 1999, an important decision was undertaken by the DRC government. A decision was made to devalue the Congolese franc up to 35.5 percent. The new value allowed traders to fix product prices in a more realistic way. At this time, the general inflation rate was 5.7 percent in Kinshasa.¹³³ The closing or scaling-down of some factories and businesses in the capital led to rising unemployment, while increases in transportation costs further reduced the amount of money people had for food. In mid-April 1999, Kabila’s popularity declined significantly in Kinshasa. The government had allowed a steep increase in gas prices, triggering a sharp hike in transportation fares. Demonstrations followed,

provoking presidential guards to open fire on a crowd, killing one woman.¹³⁴ The conflict in the DRC also had a negative impact on the economies of neighboring countries because of losses registered in commerce and tourism. During the conflict, Tanzanian businessmen stopped exports to the DRC worth \$2.2 million. Air Tanzania stopped its twice-a-week flights between Dar Es Salam and Lubumbashi, and the prosperous cross-border trade through Kalemie and Uvira dwindled. Since the DRC is such an important market for Ugandan products, Uganda stood to lose 20 to 30 percent of its external trade if the conflict did not come to a quick resolution. The conflict had already caused a significant negative impact on Uganda's industry and tourism.¹³⁵ In response to these seemingly intractable food, health, and economic crises, President Kabila announced the creation of the National Reconstruction Brigade. This organization's main objectives were to attain national food self-sufficiency and to achieve maximal exploitation of mineral resources.¹³⁶

A Flurry of Diplomacy

THE FAILURE OF EARLY DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES

The beginning of the conflict in the DRC on August 2, 1998 triggered a flurry of diplomatic efforts aimed at resolving it. Regional leaders led by Robert Mugabe met in Victoria Falls on August 8 to seek a peaceful resolution. Invited to the Zimbabwean tourist resort were President Sam Nujoma of Namibia, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Frederick Chiluba of Zambia, Pasteur Bizimungu of Rwanda, Benjamin Mpaka of Tanzania, and Laurent-Desiré Kabila of the DRC. There had been some doubts about whether or not Museveni would attend.¹ Mugabe was asked to host the summit by the leaders of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) at the recently completed Southern African International Dialogue Summit held in Windhoek, Namibia.² Ultimately, representatives of four nations—Namibia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Zambia—attended, working out a plan for immediate action.³ In the week following the summit, ministers from these countries—comprising the so-called Mediation and Verification Committee—began shuttling between Uganda, Rwanda, and the DRC, investigating Kinshasa's allegations that Kigali and Kampala were behind the Congolese rebellion.⁴ On August 11, the UN and the OAU called for sanctions on countries involved in destabilizing the DRC and jointly dispatched a team to that country to assess the situation.⁵ In the meanwhile, DRC rebels accused Zimbabwe of arming Kabila's forces. These accusations gained some credence when Mugabe agreed to send military advisers to evaluate the situation and possibly help restructure Kabila's army.

On August 13, 1998, Museveni met with the investigating ministers of the Mediation and Verification Committee in an attempt to alleviate suspicions that Uganda was involved in the DRC.⁶ On August 16, Kabila met briefly with the Angolan president, José Eduardo dos Santos, and the Namibian president, Sam Nujoma, in the Angolan capital of Luanda to discuss the deepening crisis.⁷ Diplomatic efforts intensified on August 17 when defense ministers of Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe and the DRC

government met in the Zimbabwean capital of Harare. The defense ministers of Rwanda and Uganda as well as rebel movement representatives did not come. These Harare talks were supposedly held to assess the observations of the Mediation and Verification Committee, but it is not clear whether or not the ministers ever presented their findings. Even more problematic was that no substantive dialogue could take place without the presence of representatives from Uganda, Rwanda, and the RCD, thus creating an environment in which the views of the DRC and Zimbabwe dominated. From afar, the South African government pressured the parties to open negotiations to all combatants, but the participants at the Harare meeting instead tilted toward backing Kabila militarily rather than attempting mediation. Tensions thus heightened between South Africa and the DRC, with Kinshasa accusing Pretoria of backing the rebel movement.⁸

All early SADC diplomatic efforts to secure a ceasefire failed. Rebel leader Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma stated, "There will be no ceasefire unless Kabila negotiates with us directly." The DRC government countered on August 18 by pressing the UN Security Council to force the withdrawal of what it claimed were Rwandan and Ugandan troops in the country.⁹ In response, the Security Council stressed that regional efforts to solve the conflict must be attempted first.¹⁰ The OAU also continued to consult with regional leaders, while Bizima Karaha, the RCD's minister for foreign affairs (who had recently held the same post in Kabila's government), called for negotiations with loyalist forces after the rebels had captured the town of Mbanza Ngungu in the province of Bas-Congo in the far west of the DRC.

The Victoria Falls meeting had occurred as South Africa was aggressively pursuing an independent bid to bring a peaceful resolution to the DRC situation. South Africa had dispatched Defense Minister Joe Modise and Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo on August 18, 1998 to Kampala to meet with Museveni and to Kigali to meet with Paul Kagame, the Rwandan vice president and defense minister. Nzo also met with Kabila in Lubumbashi. South Africa was attempting to push Kabila to broaden his coalition and include other political actors.¹¹ On August 20, 1998, Nelson Mandela called for a ceasefire and announced plans to hold an SADC meeting. On a day of intense negotiations, Mandela spoke with the Namibian president, Sam Nujoma, who had come to South Africa to discuss their conflicting positions on the crisis. A Ugandan special envoy, Amana Mbabazi, also accompanied Nujoma, as did representatives of the RCD.¹² Mandela made his displeasure with the Ugandan government clear for its assistance to the rebels. He also communicated with Kagame, asking him how Rwanda might help in bringing a negotiated resolution to the crisis.¹³

All of Mandela's peace efforts were put on hold by the deployment of Zimbabwean troops in the DRC; Angolan forces had also begun to enter

the DRC from the Cabinda enclave, an Angolan territory separated from the rest of that country to the south by a small strip of the DRC. Mandela denounced Zimbabwe's intervention, and Foreign Minister Nzo spent the following two days shuttling between Rwanda and Uganda, bringing a new level of urgency to the efforts to secure a ceasefire. Hearing that Zimbabwean troops had already arrived in Kinshasa to help Kabila, Museveni issued a threat stating that if unilateral interventions intensified, Uganda may be forced to take its own independent action.¹⁴ On August 23, 1998, the SADC summit called by Mandela met and declared the need for an immediate ceasefire and peace talks. The consensus was for both sides to freeze their military positions. But the justice minister in Kabila's government, Mwenze Kongolo, told a Belgian RTBF radio reporter that a ceasefire would happen only if certain conditions were met. Summit leaders issued a communiqué that offered their support to Kabila but nonetheless called for "an all-inclusive national conference for all Congolese" leading to a "transitional government until democratic elections can be held." The meeting mandated Mandela to organize a ceasefire in consultation with the OAU secretary general Salim Ahmed Salim. The initiative would attempt to incorporate aspects of the Victoria Falls process in which Zimbabwe won backing for the military support of Kabila by SADC members. Absent from the SADC summit were the presidents of Angola and Zimbabwe, both already having troops fighting in the DRC.

On August 24, 1998, the South African deputy president, Thabo Mbeki, telephoned the Angolan president, José Eduardo dos Santos, and urged him to support the South African initiative. Angola had come under heavy pressure from Mugabe to back intervention. Dos Santos was swayed by the argument that the rebels would not be able to unify the DRC and, therefore, a balkanized Congo would benefit the Angolan rebel group UNITA.¹⁵ The Mandela initiative experienced a serious setback when the rebels announced that there was little chance of a ceasefire while foreign troops remain in the country, referring to the presence of Angolans and Zimbabweans. Fighting around Kinshasa also made the process difficult by hampering communication, prompting the foreign affairs minister of Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia, in consultation with the OAU secretary general, to call for an immediate ceasefire.¹⁶ In late August, Zimbabwean diplomats proposed another round of peace talks to take place in Victoria Falls, inviting all of the combatants in the DRC conflict. Leaders of the Tutsi rebellion in the east said they would consider the proposal, while a top official in Kinshasa said it was not certain if Kabila's government would send representatives. But events on the military front outpaced the diplomatic situation: on August 31, 1998, the rebel forces appeared to be collapsing on the western front. Rebel leader Ernest Wamba Dia Wamba announced that he felt that the

conflict in the DRC had to be resolved politically, stating, "We are ready to meet with Kabila if he is willing to talk with us." The momentum was on Kabila's side. He met with Mugabe in Harare to discuss the next step in the war, while the Rwandan government made it known that it was prepared to defend itself in case of attack from the DRC. Also on August 31, 1998, the UN Security Council weighed in, calling for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, including an immediate ceasefire and withdrawal of foreign forces.¹⁷

On September 2, 1998, Secretary General Kofi Annan attended the twelfth summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Durban, South Africa, where he met informally with Kabila and Mugabe.¹⁸ In that same summit, the Rwandan foreign minister, Anastase Gasana, submitted a paragraph in the summit document condemning Kabila and his government, accusing them of training ex-FAR and Interhahamwe.¹⁹ On September 7, 1998, new talks in Victoria Falls began with all sides involved in the war, including both the rebels and Kabila. On arrival in Zimbabwe, Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma said that there would be no ceasefire before a political resolution of the conflict.²⁰ The summit was a partial success, because the presidents of the DRC, Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Uganda, and Rwanda accepted terms of a ceasefire. Unfortunately these terms were rejected by the rebels.²¹ On September 10, Kabila returned to Kinshasa after a two-week absence and played down the regional peace efforts by vowing to pursue war with the rebels.²² The next significant diplomatic attempt to address the DRC crisis occurred when the fourteen heads of state of the SADC gathered for a summit, headed by the South African president, Nelson Mandela, on Sunday, September 14 in Mauritius. Envoys from Rwanda and Uganda, who were not members of the SADC, were invited to participate. The DRC itself was relatively new to the SADC, having just become a full member after a one-year probationary period. The SADC summit in Mauritius mandated the Zambian president, Frederick Chiluba, to lead the SADC efforts to end the war since he was considered neutral in regard to the conflict. On September 19, Chiluba traveled to Kigali and Kampala, meeting with the Rwandan president, Bizimungu, and the Ugandan president, Museveni. Upon his return, Chiluba said that the Ugandan and Rwandan leaders had agreed on the terms of withdrawal of troops from the conflict zone in the DRC.²³

While Mandela and the SADC labored to secure a ceasefire in the DRC, another set of talks involving the conflict's participants commenced in Ethiopia on Thursday, September 10, 1998 under the auspices of the OAU. Ministers of seven African countries gathered at the OAU headquarters in Addis Ababa to discuss a ceasefire in the DRC. OAU secretary general Salim Ahmed Salim presided over the meeting attended by the Zambian defense minister and representatives from the DRC, Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, but no one from

the rebel movement. Regarding these talks, the RCD's deputy leader Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma warned that the rebels could not be ignored in finding a solution for the DRC conflict. According to Radio Bukavu, Ngoma said that after "the bad treatment" RCD leaders received during the collapse of the earlier Victoria Falls talks, rebel leaders decided to not go to countries hostile to the movement. Also present at the meeting in Ethiopia were advisers sent by the UN secretary general, Kofi Annan, to help deal with technical details. By Sunday, September 13, the Addis Ababa talks collapsed over the issue of rebel participation in the negotiations; the Ugandan and Rwandan delegations withdrew since they were not convinced that other participants would allow the inclusion of the rebels in the negotiation.

On September 24, the Gabonese president, Omar Bongo, also attempted to start yet another peace initiative, putting together a summit of central African countries to discuss the DRC situation. Attending the meeting in the Gabonese capital of Libreville were the presidents of Chad, the CAR, Congo-Brazzaville, and Equatorial Guinea, as well as representatives from Cameroon, Angola, and Namibia. President Dos Santos of Namibia did not attend the meeting in protest of Sudan's close relations with Kabila.²⁴ There was no hope of securing a ceasefire at that summit because the rebels were not invited; the meeting ended with participants issuing a declaration supporting Kabila and calling for withdrawal of foreign troops.²⁵

Soon after the Libreville meeting, Kabila flew to Libya, defying a UN embargo on that country, and held discussions with Muammar Gaddafi. The Libyan leader had been suspected of financing Sudanese troops who had been sent to Kindu.²⁶ At the end of September, a meeting of military chiefs of staff of the fourteen-nation SADC was held in Angola for the purpose of improving regional security and diplomatic activities. Laurent Kabila's son, Joseph, headed the DRC delegation. At this meeting, it was agreed that an attack on any member nation would justify allied military intervention.²⁷ On October 2, 1998, another peace initiative was proposed by Gaddafi for sending an inter-African military force into the DRC to replace Rwandan and Ugandan troops. Rwanda and Uganda continued to deny the presence of any of their troops in the DRC.²⁸ But not long thereafter, Museveni welcomed the Libyan plan of sending the joint force into the DRC.²⁹ Ultimately, the Libyan effort did not bear fruit.

Among all the diplomatic effort to secure a ceasefire in the DRC conflict, the Zambian initiative that commenced with talks in Lusaka in late October was probably the most successful. Indeed, Zambia became involved with DRC peace process early in August when Frederick Chiluba was invited to participate in the Victoria Falls meeting held in August 7, 1998, with Chiluba appointed by the SADC to be chief negotiator on

account of his neutrality. On October 26, 1998, he announced a meeting, officially inviting representatives from Angola, South Africa, the DRC, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe to participate. Representatives from Gabon, Rwanda, and Uganda, as well as representatives of the UN and OAU, would also be present. Sanctioned by the OAU, the meeting was viewed as the most promising so far.³⁰ In contrast to previous meetings, leaders of the Congolese rebels, barred from taking part in the September talks at Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe, found their way to the Zambian capital as uninvited observers. Yet rebel participation in the talks persisted as the primary bone of contention. Foreign Minister Stan Mudenge and Defense Minister Moven Mahachi of Zimbabwe agreed with Foreign Minister Theo Ben Gurirab of Namibia that the rebels should never be given political recognition, which allowing them to participate in the talks would entail.³¹

The next major round of peace talks took place in the Botswanan capital of Gaborone on November 20, 1998. These talks attempted to pick up the pieces from the two-day conference of a dozen African countries that was organized in Lusaka at the end of October. At the previous talks, any hope of ceasefire was dashed by Rwanda's persistent denial that it had troops in the DRC. An even more significant hurdle was the DRC government's reluctance to allow representatives of the Tutsi-led rebels into the negotiations.³² Despite the DRC government's protests, the rebels were invited to the Botswana meeting where representatives of the UN, OAU, and SADC were due to meet. By extending an invitation to rebel leader Ernest Wamba Dia Wamba, the organizers of the Gaborone talks were the first to officially involve the RCD in peace talks. Congolese representatives refused to attend the meeting but did say that they would be present at the ministerial meeting planned for December in Lusaka. Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma tried to convince the participants at the Gaborone meeting that the DRC crisis was not a war between states, but a civil conflict, and that the rebels thus needed to talk directly with Kabila.³³ The South Africans urged the DRC government to open negotiations with the rebels; Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo stated that the rebels were no longer a myth, but a "real factor in the political dynamics in the Congo."³⁴ The SADC secretary general chided the rebels for behaving childishly and unrealistically for having called for the partition of the DRC. Receiving word from the Gaborone talks, Kabila agreed to talk with Rwanda and Uganda but still refused to negotiate with the rebels.³⁵

The United States and the European Union also attempted to intervene diplomatically in the Congo crisis beginning in the fall of 1998. On September 17, the U.S. Congress heard an official report on the situation in the DRC from Susan Rice, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for African affairs.³⁶ On October 26, two senior U.S. envoys—Susan Rice and Gayle Smith, special assistant to the president and senior director for

African affairs at the National Security Council—toured seven African nations to offer help in implementing a peace agreement. Both sought support for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of foreign troops.³⁷ On November 2, Susan Rice continued with the U.S. effort to broker a ceasefire by traveling to the DRC and Zambia.³⁸ But the American idea for advancing peace met with a cold reception: Rice had proposed to Kabila that the foreign troops supporting him should withdraw as a precondition for a ceasefire.³⁹ The Americans put an optimistic spin on the mission with Rice declaring upon her return on November 17 that there was a genuine interest in a peace dialogue in the countries that she had visited.⁴⁰ But on December 15, the Clinton administration announced that it had rethought its position, concluding that there was little it could do to stop the fighting in the highly unstable environment of the DRC.

The European Union's diplomatic involvement intensified around the same time the U.S. envoys traveled to Africa. The EU exerted considerable diplomatic pressure on Rwanda to accept EU involvement in the attempted conflict resolution. On November 4, 1998, the Rwandan strongman Paul Kagame finally admitted that Kigali had deployed soldiers in the DRC "specifically for national security." Kampala also admitted having troops in the DRC but maintained that they were merely battling Ugandan rebels.⁴¹ Aldo Ajello, the EU envoy for the African Great Lakes region, conducted a mission in early November, traveling to Zimbabwe to meet with Mugabe, and also visited Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda, and Kinshasa. Ajello urged a negotiated solution to the crisis that would lead to the creation of a "government based on consensus."⁴² On November 24, Ajello expressed the EU's desire to play a more active role in resolving the DRC crisis. He noted that the EU had no intention of interfering with the existing African initiative but wanted to make clear that it would assist in the implementation of the SADC efforts. Ajello stated, "The international community has a certain responsibility. . . . It tends to pass on responsibility for African crises on to Africans and bodies like the OAU that lack the means to handle these crises."⁴³ As Aldo Ajello was making his rounds in Africa, Kabila traveled to Europe to drum up support for his government.⁴⁴ Kabila arrived in Rome on November 22; the Italian government had been pressuring him to negotiate with the rebels. He then moved on to Belgium, asking that country's government to pressure Rwanda and Uganda to withdraw troops. Kabila's last stop was Paris, where he attended a Franco-African summit that commenced on November 26. Other regional leaders involved in the DRC conflict participated as well, while an RCD delegation led by Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma also arrived in Paris although it had not been officially invited. The rebel team was urging European countries to pressure Kabila into negotiating directly with them. The rebels on the other hand were adamant that such direct talks be preceded by a ceasefire.⁴⁵

A statement issued after the Paris meeting noted that an agreement had been made “in principle” to halt hostilities and sign a ceasefire. The UN secretary general, Kofi Annan, managed to bring together under the same roof the seven parties in the conflict for the first time. A verbal agreement for a settlement emerged out of these tense sessions, based on a previous document drafted in late October in Lusaka, Zambia, under the auspices of the fourteen-member SADC.

The declaration from Paris was received with cautious optimism by the OAU.⁴⁶ Kabila himself as well as Zimbabwean and Ugandan representatives were a bit more skeptical. Only Jacques Chirac and Kofi Annan hailed it as a triumph.⁴⁷ After private conversations with regional leaders, Charles Josselin, the French cooperation and Francophone affairs delegate minister, expressed optimism that the DRC conflict could be resolved by December.⁴⁸ In the thrall of the Paris euphoria, Kofi Annan offered UN assistance in maintaining peace in the DRC if all parties agreed to the implementation of the ceasefire.⁴⁹ But on Sunday, November 30, rebel leader Wamba cast serious doubts on the worth of the pact since the Congolese insurgency was not an official party to it. The Paris agreement was further jeopardized when the Rwandan president, Bizimungu, denied that a ceasefire agreement had actually been obtained in Paris.⁵⁰ EU officials, frustrated with the apparent collapse of the Paris agreement, threatened to cut aid to the Congo if there was no ceasefire.

THE LUSAKA PEACE EFFORT

Despite the collapse of the Lusaka peace talks in late October, the SADC continued to view the Zambian president, Frederick Chiluba, as the best hope to lead the regional peace initiative. Chiluba’s efforts faced more hurdles again when on December 10, 1998 the DRC government said it would pull out of the upcoming talks in Zambia the following week if the rebels were invited.⁵¹ On Friday, December 11, reports confirmed that twelve regional leaders had been invited to another summit in Lusaka on the following Tuesday: heads of state of Angola, Botswana, the DRC, Kenya, Gabon, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The summit was to be preceded by a meeting of foreign ministers and defense ministers on Monday. The perennial sticking point—rebel participation in the talks—emerged again when South Africa pressed the issue, demanding that the rebels had to be admitted to the summit if the talks were to make any progress.⁵² Without the presence of the rebel leaders, summit participants decided to postpone the meeting indefinitely, including the meeting of foreign ministers and defense ministers.⁵³

The OAU attempted to restart its peace efforts in December. Blaise Campaore, the OAU chairman, put plans together for mid-month talks

in Ouagadougou, Burkino Faso. Before this summit, Kabila launched a diplomatic drive to gain support for his position. He talked with Frederick Chiluba of Zambia and then traveled to Nairobi and met with the Kenyan president, Daniel arap Moi. Kofi Annan remained optimistic, believing that a diplomatic solution would be reached at the Ouagadougou meeting. Kabila continued his tour to rally support. He carried out a three-day visit in Egypt and then on his way home stopped in Khartoum, Sudan. On December 10, discussions between OAU secretary general Salim Ahmed Salim and Mandela resumed. They hoped to put forth an agreeable cease-fire plan before more formal details could be hammered out at the OAU talks in Burkina Faso scheduled for December 17 and 18, 1998; however, they failed to achieve this goal. When the OAU meeting did open in Ouagadougou, a rebel delegation came to participate, but much of the same friction of past meetings was replicated since the RCD representatives were not invited to take part in the main forum of the summit, making substantial gains impossible.⁵⁴ On December 25, 1998, Libya again entered the diplomatic fray, with Gaddafi talking separately to Kabila and to the RCD chairman, Wamba Dia Wamba, and the Ugandan president, Yoweri Museveni, but little seemed to come from this effort.⁵⁵

President Frederick Chiluba continued to pursue a leadership role in the peace talks after the OAU summit, setting up a new Lusaka meeting to take place on December 27 and 28, 1998.⁵⁶ This meeting followed the same pattern as the previous one, postponed to January 1999 with no further explanation given at first.⁵⁷ Later reports revealed that the Rwandans were unhappy with some of the clauses of the prospective peace deal between Kabila and the rebels.⁵⁸ Chiluba remained confident that a ceasefire would be signed during the forthcoming meeting scheduled for January 12 through 16 in Lusaka.⁵⁹ Chiluba's optimism was based on reports confirming that the rebels fighting Kabila would finally participate in the upcoming talks. Their inclusion was probably due to Pretoria's insistence.⁶⁰ In preparation for this new round of talks, Chiluba met with President Bizimungu and Vice President Kagame of Rwanda but then cautioned that a solution to the DRC conflict could not "be found in a week or a month."⁶¹

As the new Lusaka meeting approached, yet more signs of trouble loomed. On January 12, 1999, Ernest Wamba dia Wamba insisted that the RCD would go to Lusaka only if it was assured that he would have a face-to-face meeting with Kabila. Hopes of success were nonetheless raised when South Africa, which was pushing for a ceasefire, announced that it would send a high-level delegation to the Lusaka peace talks led by Thabo Mbeki.⁶² Wamba dia Wamba's pressure paid off since the rebels were invited to the summit, but the RCD leader was cautioned that the rebels would take part only if they participated in full plenary sessions. Further complications appeared when it was reported that Kabila

was reluctant to participate in the talks until he was convinced to do so by Chiluba in Lubumbashi.⁶³ At last, Kabila sent a delegation of ten to the preliminary talks between foreign ministers and defense ministers that had opened on Friday, January 12 in Lusaka. On January 15, 1999, it was announced that the Lusaka summit would again be postponed since Kabila refused to meet face-to-face with the rebels.⁶⁴ Angola's accusations that Zambia was shipping arms to UNITA were also in part responsible for the postponement.⁶⁵

The determination of the Zambian president, Chiluba, to find a negotiated solution drove him to set up a new Lusaka meeting in early February. A day before the preliminary meeting of the defense and foreign ministers—on Tuesday, February 2—Chiluba flew to Kinshasa to speak with Kabila. The defense and foreign ministers of SADC as well as those of Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, Libya, and Uganda came to Lusaka on February 3. But again these efforts were dampened when the RCD announced that these negotiations were nonsense without its participation. The main conference commenced on February 4, but Uganda and Rwanda almost immediately walked out because of the continued sidelining of the rebels.⁶⁶ Before the five-day meeting stalled, the participants nonetheless created two committees: one to address the issue of border security and another to discuss the ceasefire. Following the collapse of the talks, South Africa's foreign minister, Alfred Nzo, reaffirmed his country's backing of Zambia's effort to negotiate a solution to the DRC crisis.⁶⁷ Chiluba pressed on, announcing a new peace plan on February 23, calling for the withdrawal of foreign troops from the DRC and the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force. Other aspects included the provision of security guarantees for Rwanda and Uganda. The plan was immediately endorsed by the EU.⁶⁸

On February 24, the diplomatic flurry continued with representatives of three different countries meeting in Angola to discuss the DRC situation. The Mozambican president (Joachim Chissano), the South African foreign minister (Alfred Nzo), and the British junior foreign office minister (Tony Lloyd) visited Luanda to convince Angola's leaders to support the ceasefire.⁶⁹ Lloyd conveyed that the EU wanted to help push the peace efforts forward and assist with the reconstruction of the DRC after the warring parties had signed an effective ceasefire. Chisano responded to the EU solicitation and embarked on a regional tour aimed at exploring possibilities for ending the war. He was to visit South Africa, Zambia, Rwanda, and Uganda in an attempt to gather information on the crisis.⁷⁰

On March 1, 1999, a summit of the presidents of the three nations that had sent troops into the DRC was held in Kinshasa. Robert Mugabe, Sam Nujoma, Eduardo dos Santos, and Kabila reviewed the conditions their troops faced in their conflict against rebels. They also discussed negotiations for a ceasefire.⁷¹ But the situation began to deteriorate when

Mugabe accused Uganda and Rwanda of intentionally stalling meaningful discussions at the peace talks.⁷² Finally, on March 11, Kabila announced that he would agree to allow the rebels to participate in meetings.⁷³ Despite this positive development, a planned new Ouagadougou summit was canceled for lack of quorum.⁷⁴

Energized by Kabila's announcement, defense and security officials of the countries involved in the conflict met in Swaziland to discuss the conflicts in the DRC and Angola on March 17.⁷⁵ Despite the concession, DRC representatives maintained a hard-line position on the withdrawal of Rwandan and Ugandan forces from the country, demanding the consequent deployment of a peacekeeping force along the eastern border.⁷⁶ On March 23, 1999, the Congolese conflict topped the agenda at an OAU foreign ministers' meeting in Addis Ababa, gaining new urgency through the important change in Kinshasa's position.⁷⁷ Kinshasa took a step even further by formally recognizing the existence of DRC rebels. Despite the apparent diplomatic advances, securing a peace deal proved to be a very slow process. The Namibian president, Sam Nujoma, expressed concern about the slowness, as opposed to the Ugandan envoy Amama Mbabazi, who was much more optimistic.⁷⁸ After agreeing to meet with the rebels, Kabila decided to organize a national debate to form a new constitution, legitimizing the liberalization of political activities.⁷⁹

Toward the end of March, the DRC envoy to Zimbabwe caused a diplomatic flap during a meeting when he described the Zambian president, Chiluba, mandated by the SADC and the OAU to mediate the DRC crisis, as "not measuring up to the task." According to this envoy, Chiluba was incompetent because every time he carried out his mediation, "another front opens somewhere, another problem emerges."⁸⁰ As if on cue, the OAU, led by Blaise Campaore of Burkina Faso, proposed an "extraordinary" summit to be held in Ouagadougou on March 30 and 31, 1999, to address the factors stalling the peace talks. These talks apparently did not materialize, and Chiluba was once again at the helm of the initiative. At the same time, Kofi Annan appointed the respected diplomat and former Senegalese minister of foreign affairs Moustapha Niassy as special UN envoy for the Great Lakes countries. The diplomats would work to identify obstacles preventing the signing of a ceasefire.⁸¹

On April 14, 1999, delegates from the OAU and UN, including the UN special envoy Moustapha Niassy, began arriving in the Zambian capital of Lusaka for renewed talks.⁸² The problem of rebel participation seemed to have been solved since Kabila assured Chiluba that the rebels could now take part directly in the discussions. For Chiluba, the intensification of the fighting and the flow of refugees across the Zambian border added urgency to the matter. The talks were described by a senior Zambian official as addressing the technical details of implementing the ceasefire agreement, which would set the stage for direct negotiations between

President Kabila and the rebels. The official was not sanguine about the outcome, noting that it was difficult to be optimistic in a situation that was this complex.⁸³ Furthermore, Rwandan officials boycotted the talks. The Rwandan minister in the president's office, Patrick Mazimhaka, said that the meeting was "a mere waste of time" as long as there was no ceasefire agreement. He repeated Rwanda's position that the RCD should be directly involved in the peace talks. Despite his promise to talk directly with the rebels, Kabila proved intransigent on the issue of ceasefire, the most important prerequisite. This irritated not only the major players in the conflict but also the Congolese people, who began demonstrating in Kinshasa against Kabila's handling of the conflict.

On April 17, the Lusaka talks came to a close after the rebels walked out of the meeting. The rebel representatives explained that they took issue with the fact that the draft ceasefire document under discussion was prepared by the DRC president and his allies without their input. The rebels refused to consent to the use of that document as the basis of the ceasefire, prompting the walk out. They had also requested that before having an official meeting the two main players in the conflict, the rebels and Kabila's government, must first meet to harmonize internal differences in the presence of a mediator.⁸⁴

THE SIRTE FRAMEWORK

Further consultations about a ceasefire in the Great Lakes region continued in Sirte, Libya, on April 18, 1999.⁸⁵ At this summit, Kabila, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Idriss Deby of Chad, and Issaiad Aferworki of Eritrea signed an agreement in the presence of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi. RCD and Rwandan representatives were notably absent. The agreement provided for a peacekeeping force and the withdrawal of foreign troops. The accord also encouraged the Congolese to engage in a "national dialogue" with all domestic participants in the conflict. The Sirte agreement was generally hailed as a positive step by all parties except for the Rwandans and rebels, who described it as nonbinding, offering no reason for the RCD to stop fighting.⁸⁶

Pressing forward, Kabila's government worked to set up a forum for a "national dialogue" to be held from May 8 to 15 in Nairobi, letting it be known that the rebels would be invited to attend. The meeting would focus on the building of a new constitution, the formation of a transitional government, and elections.⁸⁷ But the rebels proceeded to denigrate the entire idea of national dialogue. They accused Kabila of "steam-rolling" forward without conferring with them: "The agenda has been set as usual by Kabila to suit Kabila. . . . There were no consultations and the invitation list will undoubtedly exclude vital leaders without whom the effort is doomed."⁸⁸ A spokesperson for the Banyamulenge NGO,

Groupe Milima, said that the Nairobi conference was a “waste of time” since its agenda did not include the citizenship issue. On April 30, 1999, the planned debate among key figures in the DRC conflict was called off because of what Kabila’s foreign minister, Abdoulaye Yerodia Ndombasi, called “vicissitudes in preparations.”⁸⁹ On that same day, a meeting of the Congolese belligerents in Rome organized by the Catholic peace association the Sant’Egidio community was supposed to have taken place as well. But the conditions demanded by the RCD rebels, including signing a ceasefire before the meeting, never allowed the talks to get off the ground.⁹⁰

Also at this time, President Benjamin Mpaka of Tanzania orchestrated a diplomatic initiative to address the rebel side of the DRC situation. On May 1, Ugandan representatives arrived in Tanzania, as did RCD faction leader Ernest Wamba dia Wamba. The Rwandan president, Bizimungu, and his vice president and defense minister, Paul Kagame, attended, as did Yoweri Museveni of Uganda.⁹¹ Observers saw the early May Tanzanian talks, which took place in the capital of Dodoma, as making credible progress, but they nonetheless brought to light the differences in Rwandan and Ugandan policies, reflecting the split within the rebel movement itself. RCD-Goma (allied with Rwanda) and RCD-Kisangani (allied with Uganda) could not agree on a joint strategy in negotiating with the Kabila regime.⁹²

Meanwhile, President Chiluba retrenched his efforts by traveling to Libya on May 5, 1999, to meet with the Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi. The two leaders had orchestrated the recent signing of the Sirte agreement between the Ugandan president, Yoweri Museveni, and Kabila, but unfortunately Rwanda did not recognize that process, partly since Kigali viewed Chiluba as the sole legitimate peace negotiator. Despite this, the Libyan media quoted Chiluba as saying that he would work with Gaddafi to execute the Sirte agreement.⁹³ Because of the difficulties facing Chiluba’s peace initiative, the UN Security Council called upon all the parties in the DRC conflict to sign a ceasefire agreement without delay, so as to take on greater responsibility, show willingness to cooperate, and participate in the “national debate” to be held in Nairobi in June. The Security Council saw the Sirte agreement signed on April 18 as an integral part of the Lusaka process.⁹⁴ To bolster this conception, Chiluba traveled to Dar Es Salaam for consultations with Mkapa on May 12, with the Mozambican president, Joachim Chissano, also in attendance.⁹⁵ The following day, the Zambian president traveled to Lubumbashi to consult with Kabila in an effort to persuade the warring parties in the DRC to sign a ceasefire.

The next phase of the process was putting together a major summit involving regional heads of states to be held in Lusaka on June 26. Plans for the summit were announced in Pretoria after a meeting in early June

between Sam Nujoma and Nelson Mandela, who were seeking to ensure ratification of a ceasefire document drafted by the UN and the OAU with the SADC.⁹⁶ To prepare for the late June meeting, a preliminary gathering of ministers of countries involved in the war was scheduled to meet in Lusaka from June 14 through 18 to pave way for the later gathering of heads of state. Rwandan minister Patrick Mazimhaka noted, “An eventual summit meeting would depend on progress made at this initial meeting.”⁹⁷ The presidents of South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, and Rwanda agreed to the preliminary meeting of ministers. But representatives of the three rebel factions—RCD-Goma, RCD-Kisangani, and the *Mouvement de Libération du Congo* (MLC)—were not asked to participate directly in the preliminary meeting. The situation became more complex on June 19 when Emile Ilunga, a leader of the RCD-Goma, spelled out a set of conditions for peace in the DRC: (1) Kabila’s troops must stop targeting civilians, (2) Kabila’s government must release all Tutsi prisoners held in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi, and (3) all acts of genocide must cease. Ilunga declared that a ceasefire would come only after these prerequisites were met, but that the rebels still hoped to be included in the ministerial meetings and summit.⁹⁸

Before the ministerial meetings began on Monday, June 19, the chief SADC mediator Chiluba called on the presidents to empower their ministers to make decisions to advance peace prospects. Although optimistic about the talks, the second vice president of RCD-Goma, Moise Nyarugabo, nonetheless warned that Kabila should not respond with his own fanciful conditions in response to those of the rebels.⁹⁹ At their onset, the ministerial meetings had the goal of merging the various strands of mediations.¹⁰⁰ On June 22, an RCD delegation led by Emile Ilunga arrived in the Zambian capital to take part in preparatory talks. An important obstacle was removed with the rebel participation in the meeting of defense ministers scheduled for Wednesday. The ten-member rebel negotiation team included Kabila’s former foreign affairs minister Bizima Karaha and other senior members of the movement. Attempts to unite the three rebel groups before the ministerial meetings proved elusive. Instead, the Ilunga group flew to Lusaka, where it reportedly presented itself as the “de facto RCD delegation.” This situation effectively left the other rebel factions—RCD-Kisangani led by Wamba and the MLC led by Jean-Pierre Bemba—without a voice in the preparatory talks.¹⁰¹ A group of South African government officials led by Nkosazana Zuma also flew to Lusaka to take part in the talks to prepare for the regional summit.¹⁰²

Chiluba had structured the preparatory talks to begin with government-level discussions and to continue with a ministerial meeting. If all proceeded smoothly, a summit of heads of states involved in the DRC

conflict would be called on Saturday to sign a ceasefire agreement. Things seemed to be going so well that the EU gave President Frederik Chiluba €2.65 million to support his mediation efforts. But on June 23, problems began again when the Rwandan president, Bizumungu, said that the outcome of the summit would depend on Kabila's willingness to deal with the Hutu extremists.¹⁰³ The other problem was the divisions among RCD rebels and their Rwandan and Ugandan allies. Relationships between the two factions and also between Uganda and Rwanda were becoming increasingly antagonistic.¹⁰⁴ On the other side, Kabila and Mugabe held a meeting to prepare a joint strategy for the Lusaka summit. There were unconfirmed reports that Wamba of RCD-Kisangani had met Kabila in Harare, which led to further tensions between the rebels. On June 24, 1999, it was still unclear whether Mugabe would participate in the Lusaka meeting.¹⁰⁵ This doubt prompted further pressure from the UN Security Council, which reiterated its call for all parties to sign a ceasefire accord.¹⁰⁶ The uncertainties at the diplomatic level were exacerbated by the military situation.

On Friday, June 24, diplomatic efforts to broker a peace deal under SADC auspices continued in Lusaka. Contrasting reports emerged as to the likelihood of the proposed ceasefire agreement succeeding. A Zambian spokesperson said that talks dealing with the technical details were progressing. The officials were working to put the finishing touches on the agreement, and indications were that it would be ready for the heads of state summit on June 26. This positive mood was dampened by Kabila, who publicly expressed doubt that the June 26 summit would actually happen. His opinion was in part influenced by the many contradictory reports about how much progress the ministerial talks had made.¹⁰⁷ It was, therefore, no surprise that on the day the talks were to begin it was announced that the summit of heads of state had been postponed due to the unfinished state of the negotiations.¹⁰⁸

On June 28, the foreign and defense ministers gathered in Lusaka renewed discussions on a draft text for the DRC ceasefire. Yet problems arose immediately as delegates from Zimbabwe and Uganda made it clear that they objected to parts of the document. The incentive to overcome these obstacles was strong: it was agreed that if the ministers were able to come up with a workable document, the heads of state from the six countries involved in the conflict and leaders of the two main rebel factions would be called for a summit to sign the ceasefire agreement,¹⁰⁹ a revised copy of which put forth by the ministers was obtained by Agence France-Presse. It called for a cessation of hostilities to take effect in twenty-four hours after the signing, with armed forces remaining in their positions. It also envisaged the establishment of a Joint Military Commission (JMC) composed of three senior military commanders from each one of the signatories, military experts from the

UN and the OAU, and a neutral chairman appointed by the OAU. This document stated that the signatories would be (1) The DRC president (Kabila) and his supporters, the presidents of Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia; and (2) the leaders of the RCD and the MLC as well as their backers Uganda and Rwanda. The JMC would initiate and oversee the orderly withdrawal of all foreign troops from the DRC. The UN and the OAU would play a role as observers and ask many neutral African countries to contribute peacekeeping troops. The deployment of a peacekeeping force was scheduled to occur twenty days after the signing of the ceasefire agreement. The timetable for withdrawal would be announced after 101 days. The UN would deploy peacekeepers in the DRC and would be empowered to track down and root out any renegade forces. Protocols accompanying the ceasefire document called for a national dialogue in the DRC about the creation of an inclusive government incorporating the voices of the RCD and the MLC and the creation of new organizations to help develop civil society. The dialogue would aim to create a new national army from both government and rebel forces. Renegade forces would be disarmed. The UN would be encouraged to set up a mechanism for “screening the renegades” and punishing mass killers and perpetrators of crimes against humanity.¹¹⁰

On June 29, the Zimbabwean delegation made its displeasure with the draft peace plan known. It viewed the recently added items as unsatisfactory and thought they added too many complexities. The delegation was not happy with the idea of rebels holding the territory they were occupying at the time and that the troops would remain where they were at the time of cessation of fighting. The talks thus faltered, and the ministers still had considerable work before a heads of state summit could be called.¹¹¹ The DRC government now maintained that the two rebel groups could not be recognized as full participants in the talks. This development did not prevent defense and foreign ministers from continuing the talks in Lusaka in early July, including even the South African foreign minister, Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, who remained despite the transition of Thabo Mbeki replacing Nelson Mandela as president.

Yet on June 30, the distance between the belligerent parties seemed to be widening. RCD-Goma expanded the conditions for a ceasefire that it set forth on June 19. The rebel faction’s modified terms were as follows: (1) direct negotiations with the DRC government; (2) cessation of the bombing of rebel-held towns; (3) the freeing of all political prisoners held by Kabila’s regime; (4) freedom for all political parties to operate openly; (5) the disarmament of renegade forces allied with the Kinshasa regime; and lastly, (6) the cessation of attacks on ethnic Tutsi in the Congo.¹¹² Despite these new obstacles, talks about integrating the forces of domestic warring parties into a unified national army progressed. Up until this time, Jean-Pierre Ondekane, the military chief of the main

rebel group (RCD-Goma), maintained that if Wamba, head of the RCD-Kisangani faction, took part in the negotiations or signed the ceasefire agreement, the rebel delegates would pull out of the talks and the fighting would resume.¹¹³ Ondekane said that only delegations representing RCD-Goma and the MLC were empowered to commit to a ceasefire. In any event, Kinshasa still objected to any rebel group being a formal signatory to a ceasefire agreement.

The new DRC demands led to a twenty-four-hour adjournment with various delegations shuttling between hotel rooms, the Zambian foreign minister's office, and President Chiluba's official residence. Only Chiluba's determination to see a peace deal kept the ministers and officials talking. On July 2, 1999, an optimistic note from a Rwandan official leaked to the press that major problems that had delayed the peace summit had been tremendously reduced. According to this official, the talks had moved to internal Congolese issues concerning the postwar period. Negotiations between the rebels and government representatives were taking place in Zambia's Foreign Ministry. Although ministerial-level contacts had fallen off, most felt that considerable progress was being made since officials from the DRC government and the three rebel groups were carrying out direct talks even without assistance from Zambian mediators. Even the RCD-Goma and RCD-Kisangani representatives were able to communicate their differences with one another.¹¹⁴ Another positive development occurred on Saturday, July 3, when representatives from Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia (who backed Kabila) and those of Uganda and Rwanda (who backed the rebels) intensified their efforts, meeting at the Zambian Foreign Ministry in Lusaka. The day before, officials of the DRC government and rebel leaders agreed upon a broad mechanism to end the eleven-month-old war, including a ceasefire and "national dialogue." Both sides had agreed to discuss the ways a new political order and program for national reconciliation would be enacted after ceasefire, particularly the absorption of rebels into the Congolese army. This agreement had been accomplished partly because the two main rebel movements, the RCD and MLC, had formed a "common front" for the duration of the Lusaka peace talks.¹¹⁵ The prospects brightened when representatives of the Tutsi-led Rwandan government indicated that they were satisfied with the measures proposed to disarm the Interhamwe, the Hutu paramilitary organization within the DRC. The main outstanding issue was the withdrawal of foreign troops, a matter that was complicated due to the involvement of six powers.

Although chances looked excellent for the agreement to materialize, there remained the danger that the parties at Lusaka talks would sign "something for the sake of it" under pressure, without taking a hard and pragmatic look at how the document would be executed.¹¹⁶ Yet at least some of these concerns were allayed when the parties agreed to a

timetable for the implementation of the ceasefire after its signing.¹¹⁷ On July 8, 1999, there was considerable excitement over reports that a DRC peace deal had been reached just as African heads of states were preparing to attend the OAU pre-millennial summit to be held from July 12 through 14, and that the document might be ratified that Saturday.¹¹⁸ Word spread that the provisions of the agreement included a Joint Military Commission (JMC) made up of African countries to monitor the implementation of a ceasefire and disarmament of Interahamwe. The UN would eventually send a peacekeeping mission, but it was realistically noted that this would take several months. Wamba, leader of the RCD-Kisangani faction, described the agreement as a “very good thing.” He only added that “we hope all the parties will sign the agreement in good faith so that its implementation will not pose problems.”¹¹⁹

The following were the main points of the draft ceasefire agreement on the DRC conflict reached at ministerial talks on Wednesday, July 7:

1. The cessation of hostilities shall come into force within twenty-four hours of the signing of the peace agreement.
2. The United Nations Security Council, acting in collaboration with the OAU, shall constitute, facilitate, and deploy an appropriate peacekeeping force in the DRC to ensure the implementation of the agreement and track down all armed groups.
3. The parties to the conflict will set up a JMC, which together with a UN/OAU observer group, will be responsible for carrying out the implementation of the ceasefire and peacekeeping operations until the deployment of the UN peacekeeping force.
4. The final withdrawal of all foreign forces shall be carried out within nine months following the withdrawal schedule to be prepared by the UN, the OAU, and the JMC.
5. There shall be a mechanism for disarming militias, especially the Interahamwe, the Rwandan Hutu group responsible for the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and an important factor in the DRC war.
6. All parties have committed themselves to the process of locating, identifying, disarming, and assembling all members of armed groups in the DRC.
7. The parties shall ensure that armed groups operating alongside their troops or on the territory under their control comply with the processes leading to the dismantling of those groups.
8. The parties shall release individuals detained or taken hostage and shall give them the latitude to relocate to any provinces within the DRC or country where their security will be guaranteed.
9. Immediate and unhindered access was to be given to the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to

arrange for the release of prisoners of war and the recovery of the dead and wounded.

10. Once the agreement is signed, the government of the DRC, the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD), and the Congolese Liberation Movement (MLC), as well as unarmed opposition groups, shall enter into open dialogue. These negotiations will be held under the aegis of a neutral facilitator to be agreed upon by all Congolese parties. The signatories of the document will be Angola, the DRC government, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, the RCD, and the MLC, while the witnesses will be Zambia, the OAU, the UN, and the SADC.

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PART II

Kabila: An Obstacle
to Peace

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The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement

THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT

On July 10, 1999, the allied heads of states of the DRC, Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia signed the Lusaka accord, as did their Ugandan and Rwandan counterparts. But the rebel leaders still held out from doing so. The signatories and the UN Security Council urged the rebel groups to resolve their differences and sign the agreement as soon as possible.¹ President Chiluba launched a new round of diplomatic efforts, knowing full well that the ceasefire was unlikely to hold if the rebels themselves failed to agree to it. The rebels went as far as threatening to press on with their military campaign to oust Kabila.² Acceding to Chiluba's pressure, RCD-Goma, RCD Kisangani, and MLC factions met in Tanzania on July 22, 1999, at the invitation of the ex-Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere. In the period leading up to the meeting, the RCD-Goma vice president, Moise Nyarugabo, warned that just because the rebel groups had agreed to attend these talks did not necessarily mean that they would sign. In addition, Nyarugabo repeated that the RCD-Goma faction refused to acknowledge Ernest Wamba dia Wamba's signature in the name of the RCD but noted that "if he forms a separate group, then he can sign for that group."³

Nonetheless, the RCD-Kisangani's "rapporteur," Jacques Depelchin, announced that Wamba was in Dar es Salaam for the meeting and that all the rebel groups were expected to sign. Unfortunately, on July 28 talks between the rebels factions ended in a stalemate. Wrangling continued between the leaders of the RCD-Goma's Emile Ilunga and his ousted predecessor Wamba, who continued to lead the breakaway faction in Kisangani. Ilunga resisted the proposal that the two men sign jointly, stressing that he was the "sole guardian" of the RCD movement. After the Dar es Salaam meeting, the South African foreign minister, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, launched an initiative aimed at persuading

the Congolese rebels to sign. Traveling to Uganda and Rwanda, she met leaders of the two countries and of the RCD-Goma.⁴ On July 30, the South African government expressed concern about the seizure of towns by rebel forces after the ceasefire had been signed, a violation that endangered the entire agreement.⁵ Dlamini-Zuma's diplomatic efforts paid off, because on July 31 Jean-Pierre Bemba of the MLC finally signed the ceasefire document in Lusaka. He declared that he did so in the interest of all Congolese. He also said that he would take it upon himself to convince the RCD to sign as well. Both Ilunga and Wamba welcomed Bemba's move. On August 3, 1999, General Rachid Lallali, chairman of the Joint Military Committee (JMC) in charge of implementing the ceasefire, also described Bemba's signing as a step in "the right direction."⁶

Using this momentum, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda organized a meeting in Kampala on August 3, 1999, to help reconcile the leaders of the two RCD factions. Pressure on the rebels to sign also came from the EU through its special envoy, Aldo Ajello.⁷ At last, the announcement came on August 23 that the RCD rebels were ready to sign. The complicated arrangement aimed at overcoming the issue of whether RCD-Goma or RCD-Kisangani had the right to represent the RCD as a whole as a signatory was worked out by Museveni and the Rwandan vice president, Paul Kagame. In a meeting between both men and the South African minister Dlamini-Zuma, they formulated the idea that the fifty founders of the RCD would be signatories of the agreement. This arrangement was agreed upon at the SADC summit in the Mozambican capital of Maputo that same week.

Regional observers were skeptical about the overall arrangement. It was not only cumbersome but also raised so many complex questions for which the agreement had only vague answers. These questions included the management of the civilian aspects of implementation, representation at negotiations, and the makeup of the JMC. The implementation of the agreement appeared to be as difficult as the process of securing the signatories themselves.⁸ Despite these anticipated problems, representatives of RCD-Kisangani flew from Kampala to Lusaka on August 27 to sign the ceasefire accord.⁹

On Sunday, August 31, Zambian government officials made last minute consultations with rebel factions to finalize the document. Present in Lusaka were the foreign ministers from the fourteen-member SADC, along with officials from the UN, OAU, Rwanda, and Uganda. Representatives of the MLC were also present as observers. On Tuesday, July 31, 1999, the fifty founding members of the RCD signed the ceasefire agreement with President Frederick Chiluba presiding over the ceremony.¹⁰ That the process had come this far was viewed by many as a minor miracle, but most felt that an arduous journey down the long road to peace still awaited.

IMPLEMENTATION: CREATION OF THE JOINT MILITARY COMMITTEE AND JOINT POLITICAL COMMITTEE

As all suspected, the implementation of the ceasefire proved just as difficult as the signing itself. First of all, it required the creation of several institutions. On July 20, 1999, ten days after the historic signing, the agreement called for a meeting of the signatories in which two bodies would be formed: (1) the Joint Political Committee (JPC), a ministerial committee that was to play the role of a supreme consultative body and (2) the Joint Military Committee (JMC), a defense-oriented body that would monitor the maintenance of the ceasefire. The defense and foreign ministers of Angola, DRC, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe attended, and officials from Zambia and the SADC also participated as observers. Only the rebels did not attend. It was agreed that the defense ministers would gather again as soon as the OAU has appointed a neutral chairman of the JMC. According to the agreement, the committee would be comprised of two military officials from each belligerent party under the command of a neutral chairman. The meeting also acknowledged the ongoing efforts by President Chiluba to secure the signature of the RCD and the MLC rebel groups. Under the ceasefire agreement, the JMC would execute peacekeeping operations until the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force. The JMC, together with the OAU and UN, was to draw up a definitive schedule for the orderly withdrawal of all foreign forces from DRC. On August 24, 1999, the military officers needed for the UN team were pledged by twenty-five countries.

The JMC faced a daunting problem almost immediately. Both RCD-Goma and RCD-Kisangani insisted that they be given representation on the JMC. The Lusaka agreement allowed for each signatory—state or rebel faction—to nominate two members to the JMC. But the compromise posed considerable problems for the JMC composition as many of the fifty RCD founding members vied for the representation. Despite this issue, the JMC and the JPC held their first preparatory meeting on September 3, 1999, in Lusaka. The two bodies temporarily set aside the contentious matter of “who should represent the RCD, because they want to move ahead.”¹¹ They allowed delegates of both RCD factions to attend the meeting, which also included representatives from Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, Uganda, and Rwanda, as well as those of the UN and the OAU. The atmosphere was cordial. To try solving the issue, the RCD factions met in South Africa immediately following the Lusaka meeting but failed to agree on JMC representation.¹² Despite this outcome, Wamba was nonetheless optimistic after the meeting, saying that there were no serious obstacles to working out representation issues.¹³ But Wamba’s optimism did not stop the squabbling. On September 22, OAU

officials expressed concern over the delay in the implementation of the ceasefire agreement. They noted that the essential requirements for the implementation of the agreement still had not been fulfilled; the selection of rebel representatives for the JMC and the appointment of the facilitator for the national dialogue had not yet taken place.¹⁴

The first full plenary session of the JMC was scheduled to take place on October 11 in the Ugandan capital of Kampala. Beforehand, the JMC held several preliminary meetings in Lusaka, but the question of rebel representation remained unresolved by the appointed date, delaying the start of formal talks. This problem pushed the European Union to consider providing more financial support for the JMC.¹⁵ The rebel representation issue had been the biggest stumbling block so far, but things were moving quickly in other areas, most notably with the OAU's appointment of the Algerian general Rachid Lallali as chairman of the JMC. He convened the October 11 meeting and successfully mediated negotiations to find a solution to the question of rebel representation. Lallali's arrangement called for the JMC to be based in Lusaka, and that it would be comprised of two members from each of the belligerent parties, including the MLC and both factions of the RCD factions, as well as observers from Zambia and the OAU and the UN. At that meeting, the JMC decided to create four zones in which JMC observers would be deployed: Lisala and Boende in the Equateur province, Kabinda in the Kasai Oriental province, and Kabalo in Katanga. Observers in each zone would verify each party's position and investigate ceasefire violations. The JMC also agreed upon a map of frontline positions from which it would work. Funding was, of course, crucial for the success of the JMC. Uganda promised to contribute \$100,000 to the JMC and Zambia has already allocated an equal amount. South Africa offered four helicopters and a sizable but undisclosed sum of money, while other SADC members offered modest amounts.¹⁶ By October 12, the JMC was making headway in obtaining funds but was still rather short of what it needed. The French government's pledge of \$700,000 on October 19 was a significant boost.¹⁷ In its second plenary session on October 31, 1999, the JMC announced that it had raised more than \$5 million from a variety of sources.¹⁸

The second formal meeting of the JMC took place between October 31 and November 5, 1999. Held in Lusaka, this session addressed the logistics of establishing the four operational JMC zones and deploying OAU military observers. The JMC established four working groups to consider the following: the creation of humanitarian corridors and the exchange of POWs; mechanisms for the disarmament of armed paramilitary groups and Congolese civilians; mechanisms for the disengagement of rivals forces; and the orderly withdrawal of foreign forces. By mid-November, Zambia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Namibia, Belgium, and the OAU had contributed funds to the JMC, while France,

the United States, and the EU had made pledges.¹⁹ On November 15, 1999, the EU proposed donating €1.2 million to cover part of the non-military operational expenditures. The EU had previously contributed €2.65 million to the mediation effort. The EU support enabled the JMC to deploy its observers for several months; EU representatives nonetheless expressed concerns about the actual implementation of the agreement.²⁰ In addition to the EU, the United States promised to deliver \$1 million to the JMC, and U.S. ambassador to the UN Richard Holbrooke urged other countries to also contribute.²¹ On November 20, the British government donated £50,000 (\$80,000) to the JMC to purchase office equipment for the commission's secretariat. On November 26, the Swedish government also decided to contribute a maximum of \$800,000 to the JMC specifically to strengthen the OAU's conflict management capacity.²²

Despite lingering concerns about implementation, the JMC met again on November 30, 1999, for its third full session at Harare. The four working groups presented their reports, from which the JMC formulated and adopted the following points, pending approval by the JPC:

1. Creating humanitarian corridors, releasing hostages, exchanging prisoners of war, with the assistance of the UN Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs, the Red Cross, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC);
2. Working out mechanisms and budget estimates for disarming, tracking down, and quartering armed groups; determining procedures for handing over mass killers, perpetrators of crimes against humanity, and other war criminals; and disarming all Congolese civilians who were illegally armed;
3. Drafting mechanisms and procedures for the disengagement of forces;
4. Working out mechanisms, procedures, and a calendar for the withdrawal of foreign troops and the mechanisms for monitoring the pull out;
5. Resolving the question of stationing UN liaison officers in the DRC territory.

Participants in the third JMC session discussed, along with OAU observers, the continuing deployment of its regional structures within the DRC. The JMC endorsed the future dispatch of UN military liaison officer teams to Bukavu, Bunia, Kabalo, Kisangani, Dumusa, Gemena, Isiro, Kamina, Kalemie, Kindu, Lubumbashi, Mbuji-Mayi, and Pepa. Simultaneous with the November 30 JMC meeting, the UN Security Council officially created its *Mission des Nations Unies pour Congo* (MONUC) to work with the JMC to accomplish its tasks. Also

in the third session, the JMC requested the MONUC to submit proposals for future reconnaissance and dispatch of teams to Mbandaka, Matadi, Likasi, and Dilolo. With some assistance from the MONUC, the JMC had already deployed regional JMC and OAU observers at Lisala, Boende, Kabinda, and Kabalo.

On January 13, 2000, the JMC decided to draw up a new timetable since the old one proved untenable; it proposed doing so by convening a fourth plenary session in Lusaka. All the warring parties attended, this time under the acting chairmanship of the Zambian general Timothy Kazembe.²³ On January 17, 2000, the JMC announced that it lacked the funds necessary to carry out effectively the task required under the agreement despite the multiple donation pledges it had received. By the fifth meeting held in the Zambian capital on February 22, 2000, it was agreed that the JMC headquarters would be moved to Kinshasa to reinforce cooperation between the JMC and the MONUC.²⁴ This decision imposed an additional burden on the JMC, because on March 2 Rwanda rejected this proposition. For security reasons Kigali was not comfortable sending its representatives to Kinshasa. The JMC faced other difficulties as well. On March 17, 2000, the Ugandan foreign affairs minister, Amama Mbabazi, said that the JMC was supposed to enact a ceasefire, orchestrate troop withdrawals, and oversee the deployment of UN forces, but that it had failed to do so for lack of resources. He criticized the international community for responding so weakly in its support of the process. He noted accurately that adequate financial support from the international community had yet to materialize.²⁵

These setbacks did not prevent a sixth meeting of the JMC held in Kampala on April 3, 2000, followed by a JPC meeting at the ministerial level. Among the major issues discussed at the JMC meeting were the ongoing ceasefire violations, cooperation of the belligerents with the UN mission, and the financing of activities related to ceasefire supervision.²⁶ This JMC meeting came at a time when implementation of the agreement was increasingly threatened by belligerents' attempts to use the ceasefire to change the military situation on the ground. But the JMC succeeded in bringing this situation under control at a meeting held in the Ugandan capital of Kampala beginning on April 7, 2000. Mbabazi announced that each military chief would "order the forces on the ground to ceasefire hostilities and start process of disengagement."²⁷ The ensuing ceasefire appeared to hold until late May, when violations occurred in the Equateur province.

The seventh plenary session of the JMC commenced on June 2, 2000, in Lusaka, the first to take place after the investigation of the Equateur incidents. The meeting studied and reacted to the report made by members of a special mediation mission to Kisangani in Province Orientale and Gbadolite in the Equateur province. The mission had reviewed contested

positions between the warring parties and discussed the details of plans for disengagement and redeployment into new defensive positions, disarmament, demobilization, repatriation of foreign armed groups, and the release of POWs. Presidential Affairs Minister Eric Silwamba of Zambia appealed to all the parties in conflict to cooperate with the regional JMC deployed at Kabalo, Lisala, Boende, and Kabinda. But financial problems continued to paralyze operations of the JMC.²⁸ On June 8 and 9, 2000, the Political Committee for the implementation of ceasefire held its sixth meeting. It adopted mechanisms for the “Disarmament, Demobilization, Resettlement, and Reintegration” (DDRR) of all armed groups as stipulated in the Lusaka ceasefire.²⁹ After considering the JMC report and reviewing outstanding issues regarding implementation, the committee commended the JMC for its work toward that end.

On September 18, 2000, the JPC announced a meeting to be held at the end of the month to further the implementation of the Lusaka agreement and to discuss the disengagement plan put forward by Rwanda in August. This meeting was to be followed by a meeting of the JMC, with the chiefs of staff of all warring parties in attendance.³⁰ Yet throughout the fall, the JMCs proved unable to conduct its business effectively due to funding issues. On January 16, 2001, media outlets reported the imminent closure of the JMC because of lack of funds. Its acting chairman, Zambian Brigadier Timothy Kazembe, noted: “If we are not revived very quickly, then we may face a shut down.” Commission officials said that the JMC needed about \$6 million per year to operate but that it had received under \$3 million since both African and overseas donors had failed to deliver on their pledges. It was unlikely that the commission would be allowed to totally shut down at such a critical stage of the DRC peace process, but commission officials used the timing to make their dire financial situation well known. They may have also hoped that the UN would become much more closely involved in JMC operations and perhaps even bring the commission under UN auspices. A donor session held in New York later that month did not prove fruitful.³¹

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT: THE UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE

The JMC had been created to verify the observation of the ceasefire in order to facilitate the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force in the DRC. On July 12, 1999, two days after the signing of the ceasefire by belligerent countries, the UN was getting ready to authorize such a deployment. As of July 13, the rebels still refused to sign the accord, and thus the UN had to suspend a preparatory mission to evaluate conditions for the deployment of Military Liaison Officers (MLO).³² But the overall mood turned optimistic when, one day later, the Zimbabwean defense

minister, Movan Mahachi, declared that his country's forces would start withdrawing from the DRC within three months.³³ On the same day Nigeria and Ghana pledged to send peacekeeping troops to the DRC.³⁴

Without waiting for the rebels to sign the ceasefire, the UN secretary general, Kofi Annan, "strongly recommended" on July 19 that the UN immediately authorize the deployment of ninety military liaison personnel to the DRC and started plans for the deployment of 500 military observers. The MONUC was to be led by a special representative still to be appointed. Annan also prepared to submit a detailed proposal to the Security Council for the deployment of a peacekeeping mission in the DRC. According to Annan, the ninety military personnel would serve as liaison officers in the national capitals and near military headquarters of the belligerents if the situation on the ground allowed it. There would also be a liaison stationed in Lusaka. By July 23, 1999, the UN Security Council finalized a draft resolution authorizing the deployment of up to 90 liaison personnel.³⁵ Their mandate was to help the JMC, establish and maintain contact with the belligerents, and provide the JMC with technical help to implement the ceasefire.³⁶ By the end of August, the UN announced that it was about to deploy the first twenty-six of the ninety military liaison officers within the DRC. According to this plan, two were to be dispatched to Kinshasa, one to Kigali, and one to Kampala. The team's mission was to support the JMC in Lusaka. Six other members were assigned to set up an advance UN headquarter in Kinshasa, while the remaining sixteen were dispatched to regional capitals of the signatories of the accord.

Unfortunately on September 5, 1999, the first twenty-six of the ninety UN liaison officers did not arrive at the capitals of the DRC and neighboring countries.³⁷ Apparently the mission had been delayed due to lack of cooperation on the part of the DRC government. Waiting to sort out the differences, the MONUC conducted an induction training course for twenty-one of the MLOs in Nairobi from September 9 through 11, preparing them for immediate deployment in the DRC. But it was not until late September that the MONUC finally began its operations in the DRC, and it unfortunately started on poor footing. MONUC officials received "mixed signals" from the Kabila government. One UN official noted, "The attitude of some authorities does not seem very supportive of our presence, but we are optimistic that that will change." DRC government officials hampered the establishment of the mission's advance headquarters through the use of bureaucratic red tape. Nonetheless, by September 25, nineteen of the MLOs had been successfully deployed in Kinshasa, Kampala, Kigali, Bujumbura, Lusaka, Harare, and Windhoek.³⁸

On October 12, 1999, the UN asked that the belligerents furnish written pledges guaranteeing the security of UN personnel in the DRC.

The secretary general's spokesperson insisted that these pledges be done in writing on account of the frequent violations of the ceasefire and the DRC government's track record of noncompliance.³⁹ These pledges were made at the first full meeting of the JMC and were made a precondition for the full deployment of a UN peacekeeping force.⁴⁰ According to a UN official, "the deployment of any peacekeeping force is many months away, at best, and highly dependent on continued progress on other aspects on the peace deal." This reluctance of the UN prompted Zimbabwe and Namibia to express concern on October 18 over the slow progress in the implementation of the DRC ceasefire agreement.⁴¹ Other countries involved in the conflict reiterated this criticism. Officials at a regional meeting in Lusaka accused the UN of providing "more and appropriate" responses to crises in other parts of the world, but not in Africa. On October 19, even the Kabila regime joined in denouncing the lack of action by the UN, at the same time pushing the organization to condemn Uganda and Rwanda as aggressors.⁴² On October 21, reports of disagreement among southern African nations as to the scale and timing of any deployment of South African peacekeepers in the DRC also complicated the situation.⁴³

As of November 8, the UN military personnel still had not entered zones held by the DRC government.⁴⁴ To try softening Kabila's attitude toward the MONUC, Annan sent his special envoy Moustapha Niasse to Kinshasa on November 7 to discuss the ongoing deployment process.⁴⁵ This effort seemed to have been successful, because after a meeting with Kabila, Interior Minister Gaetan Kakudji, and Foreign Minister Yerodia, Niasse announced on November 10 that MONUC liaison officers would be deployed immediately to agreed sites in zones controlled by the DRC government.⁴⁶ On the following day, a UN team preparing the way for a peacekeeping force began to fan out to different sites. The long-delayed flight of MLOs from Kinshasa to Gbadolite took place, while another eleven-member team commenced an itinerary that would take it to Kisangani, Goma, and Kananga, the last being the only government-held town to be visited.⁴⁷ These latest moves by the DRC government were encouraging but still did not allow for the completion of the first phase of the MONUC deployment. There was "no mention of moving to the next phase, at least not now," as one UN official said.

By November 16, it could be said that the UN's first phase of involvement under the peace deal—the establishment of an observer mission to the DRC known as the MONUC—was well underway. The MONUC had set up advance headquarters in Kinshasa and deployed MLOs in Kinshasa, Kigali, Kampala, Harare, and Windhoek: all of the capitals of the state signatories. Liaison officers were also sent to Bujumbura and Lusaka, while provisional liaison officers were ready to go to the Angolan capital of Luanda once conditions allowed. The MONUC had also established

contacts with the reluctant players at their headquarters and begun gathering intelligence and was actively participating in the JMC meetings as well. This cooperation helped the JMC investigate ceasefire violations, make security assessments, and determine the present and future locations of combatant positions. This role ultimately would require the deployment of liaison officers throughout the country and at the fronts. But the MONUC still had not completed its deployments, hampered by the uncooperative authorities in Kinshasa. The source of MONUC officials' displeasure with the DRC government were the limited nature of its security guarantees and its slowness in allowing MLOs to deploy to government-held areas. These delays frustrated the work of a UN technical survey team assigned to assess security conditions and infrastructures in thirteen proposed locations throughout the country, impeding preparations for the second and third phases of UN intervention.

On November 24, the MONUC began dispatching the remaining MLOs following the successful completion of the technical assessment of five locations across the DRC. Four MLOs arrived in Gbadolite and another team of four traveled to the government-held town of Kananga.⁴⁸ On November 26, four other MONUC officers arrived in Goma and set up a base in the rebel headquarter town, and four others traveled to Kisangani.⁴⁹ The completion of the first phase of the UN mission perhaps prompted the Security Council's extension of the UN mission's mandate and a change in the composition of the force to help implement the ceasefire on November 30. The Security Council also asked Kofi Annan to take necessary administrative steps to equip up to 500 UN military observers for the DRC.⁵⁰ Unfortunately, on December 7, an eruption of violence in the DRC prevented the UN from pushing forward with its plan. U.S. secretary of defense William Cohen noted, "We think there has to be a peace before there can an eventual peacekeeping mission in there."⁵¹

On December 13, the blame game renewed/resumed when the countries backing Kabila expressed concern over the slow pace of the implementation of the Lusaka agreement. They called all parties to uphold it and demanded that the UN observers be brought in as soon as possible.⁵² On December 16, these countries went even further by accusing the UN of killing the agreement by delaying its involvement.⁵³ Under pressure, Kamel Morjane met with Kabila on December 17. Kabila promised the UN representative that he would help the MONUC carry out its mission.⁵⁴ This led to the DRC's authorization on December 23 to deploy the MLO teams in Gemena, Isiro, and Lubumbashi.⁵⁵ The MONUC was still awaiting authorization from the RCD-Goma rebels for the deployment of MLOs in Kindu.

On January 17, 2000, MONUC deployments still encountered difficulties, particularly in positioning military liaison officers at the rear

headquarters of the belligerents and in other key locations. Obtaining the needed guarantees for the security and freedom of movement of the technical survey team still proved elusive. This team had been dispatched to inspect the proposed locations at which UN personnel would be deployed, assessing the military, political, and logistical infrastructure at each site. Teams of UN military liaison officers had already been positioned at eight locations: Gbadolite, Goma, Kananga, Kindu, Gemena, Isiro, Lisala, and Boende, and the MONUC was about to attempt to put a team in place at Kabinda. Yet proposed visits to important locations such as Mbuji-Mayi, Mbandaka, Lubumbashi, and Matadi had yet to be approved by the DRC government. This resistance pushed RCD-Goma to insist that UN personnel be positioned at additional sites on government-held territories in order to ensure a balanced deployment.

By mid-January 2000, the number of UN military liaison officers deployed in the DRC and in the capitals of the belligerent parties and elsewhere in the subregion had reached a total of seventy-nine. On the basis of information sent back by liaison officers, the MONUC had built a picture of the military, logistical, and humanitarian situations in all of the locations considered important for UN deployment plans. According to that information, the UN developed mechanisms of coordination and cooperation with the JMC and OAU, with the MONUC providing assistance to the JMC on a routine basis. In early November 1999, the MONUC had also deployed two MLOs in Addis Ababa to improve links between the MONUC and the OAU. The MONUC also provided training for the OAU observers deployed to serve with the regional offices of the JMC at Boende, Lisala, and Kabinda. Additionally, UN officers stationed in Lusaka to work with the JMC requested the establishment of a joint twenty-four-hour operation room to enable the JMC and UN personnel to better receive and coordinate information from teams in the field.

On January 19, 2000, even though the deployment of the ninety MLOs had not been completed and the 500 military personnel had not yet started moving into the DRC, Kofi Annan asked the Security Council for an extra 5,000 troops to protect the 500 military observers, finding this measure necessary “even given the willingness of the parties to provide security for MONUC personnel.” He felt that the level of insecurity, the degraded infrastructure, and the difficult terrain in the country required the deployment of a force to protect military observers and civilian staff and to facilitate their activities.⁵⁶ The force would be concentrated provisionally in Mbandaka, Mbuji-Mayi, Kisangani, and a point yet to be determined in the southeast. The military task of the expanded MONUC force would include military liaison, monitoring the cessation of hostilities, investigating ceasefire violations, and verifying disengagement.

Annan's proposal may have sounded like an aggressive and proactive solution, but by January 24, the situation on the ground had become so dangerous that this new force began to seem inadequate. The renewed wave of violence led the Security Council to hold a top-level meeting, and among the forty speakers there were seven African heads of state and ten ministerial-level representatives.⁵⁷ They all called for an effective UN presence in the DRC. During this meeting Kabila recognized that the Lusaka agreement was not working and that its implementation was facing serious problems. The UN peacekeepers had yet to be deployed, and UN officials demanded that foreign troops be withdrawn before this could happen.⁵⁸ On January 26, 2000, Richard Holbrooke announced that the Security Council had begun considering the resolution authorizing the expansion of the current mandate of the MONUC.⁵⁹ In light of this, the South African government reaffirmed its pledge to send a peacekeeping force but was waiting for concrete indications that the ceasefire would hold. And another serious obstacle was that the DRC was sending out signals that it might not accept a South African contingent in a UN peacekeeping force.⁶⁰ Even after this meeting on the Congo, the Security Council issued a statement that fell short of promising the immediate deployment of UN troops.⁶¹

But on February 4, 2000, the Security Council announced its support of Annan's proposal to extend the UN mission and send troops to the DRC. The troops were not to serve as interposition force but would have the capacity to protect civilians.⁶² Ambassador Holbrooke, who had termed January 2000 as the "Month of Africa," was a chief instigator in this effort. He further declared that 2000 should be renamed the "Year of Africa."⁶³ The Clinton administration's interest in the DRC was further bolstered by the first ever National Summit on Africa from February 16 through 20, held in Washington, DC. Speaking at the summit on February 18, Clinton himself said that he would support the deployment of a peacekeeping operation. On February 22, his administration asked Congress to provide \$42 million to help end the conflict that was becoming known as "Africa's First World War."⁶⁴ Coinciding with this support was the Security Council's formal authorization to deploy up to 5,537 military personnel, including the 500 observers who passed on February 24. By this resolution, the MONUC mandate too was pushed forward to August 31, 2000. This was a sea change, because until this moment the UN and the United States had refused to deploy peacekeepers in the DRC unless the fighting would stop and the belligerents would demonstrate a renewed commitment to peace.⁶⁵

Kabila managed to temper the enthusiasm surrounding these new commitments when he announced that he could not foresee the deployment of the main UN forces for at least 120 or even 150 days since aggression by several warring parties was still evident. Kabila would not assure

the security of UN forces until this aggression ended, and he would withhold his authorization of the main force's deployment into the DRC until that time.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, the UN proceeded with its plans. On March 3, 2000, UN "initial enabler" logisticians and communication staff arrived in the DRC and started to prepare the ground for the peacekeeping force.⁶⁷ By March 7, the UN readied to send in the peacekeepers but still awaited the green light from Kabila's government and signs on the ground that all parties would adhere to the ceasefire. U.S. officials noted that a successful deployment of a UN peacekeeping force could occur only if the parties involved in the conflict demonstrated a commitment to the Lusaka agreement, and this could happen only if all parties strictly adhered to the provisions of the protocol.

On March 15, 2000, the implementation of the first phase of troop deployment by the MONUC began. Eighty-five officers were sent to eleven towns in the DRC: Gbadolite, Gemena, Lisala, Isiro, Bunia, Boende, Goma, Kananga, Kinshasa, Kindu, and Kisangani. Another contingent was to be deployed to Kabinda, but this did not happen on account of logistical reasons. On March 17, a UN technical assessment team completed trips to three of the four sites at which peacekeeping troops would eventually be based: the towns of Mbuji-Mayi, Kananga, and Mbandaka.⁶⁸ Yet on March 23, the Security Council expressed deep concern about renewed fighting in Equateur, Katanga, and Kivu provinces, as well as about preparations being made for further military action by both sides. A Security Council spokesman noted that these developments would prevent the deployment of the peacekeeping force.⁶⁹ Dissipating some of these concerns was the signing of a new ceasefire agreement between the belligerents in Kampala on April 7, 2000.⁷⁰ The agreement allowed the creation of buffer zones where UN peacekeepers could be deployed.⁷¹

On April 11, the leaders of Angola, the DRC, Namibia, and Zimbabwe gathered in Kinshasa to discuss the implementation of the Kampala ceasefire and encouraged the UN to use this opportunity to deploy a peacekeeping force as soon as possible.⁷² On the same day, OAU secretary general Ahmed Salim urged the same, while a day later, Richard Holbrooke appeared before the U.S. Congress to push for its support of the Lusaka peace process. He warned that continued deployment delays would doom the peace process in the DRC.⁷³ Given the newly stabilizing security situation by mid-April, the UN could finalize preparations for the deployment of the remaining military officers in Bukavu, Kabalo, Kabinda, Kalemie, Mbandaka, and Mbuji-Mayi.⁷⁴ Using this forward momentum, Annan on April 21 made an urgent call for member states to contribute military personnel to the MONUC force.⁷⁵

Two weeks after the signing of the Kampala agreement, the belligerents came to the agreement that the new ceasefire was generally effective,

generating considerable optimism among all parties. The fact that this ceasefire seemed to be taking hold put considerable pressure on the UN to act. With the advent of the Kampala ceasefire, the MONUC had concluded that it could skip the stage of having all parties recommit to a ceasefire and moved directly to the next phase: seeking agreement on a disengagement plan. The MONUC also proposed the establishment of a body composed of the commanders of the different armies in the conflict to work apart from the existing political committee made up of the various ministers of foreign affairs and defense. This body would link the JMC and the PMC. The MONUC then sought agreement on the implementation of the disengagement plan and looked for ways to affect a disengagement zone at least thirty kilometers long between the different forces in the DRC.

The disengagement process looked possible if proper support was forthcoming. But the MONUC was still experiencing some difficulties in obtaining the needed forces. All UN member states were being asked to contribute troops, but commitments were slow to materialize. At this delicate moment, it was essential that the four battalions be deployed in four regions within a short window of time.⁷⁶ As of April 28, the Kampala ceasefire still held, and UN special envoy Kamal Morjane even noted a greater degree of cooperation from the DRC government.⁷⁷ During an African summit on the DRC in Algeria at the end of April some of the needed troop commitments began to fall into place. Nigeria and South Africa announced that they would participate in the MONUC force on April 30 (for the first time South Africa was participating in an international peacekeeping force). Then on May 4, the UN and the DRC government signed the official agreement allowing the deployment of 5,500 UN peacekeeping forces.⁷⁸ The United States was asked to pay 25 percent (\$41 million) for the year 2000. At a press conference in Kigali, U.S. ambassador to the UN Richard Holbrooke stated, "It is well worth the cost . . . the contending parties announced that they are ready to stop shooting. . . . The Africans came up with a plan all they are asking for us to support it."⁷⁹

Having seen similar successes end in futility in the recent past, the Security Council called for caution. On May 5, it recommended that before making its final recommendation on deployment, the secretary general "should speak to each one of the Lusaka parties at the highest level. He should seek their unequivocal commitment to assist the proposed deployment of Phase II of the MONUC, test their commitment to the maintenance of the ceasefire, and ask for their firm undertaking in writing to support Phase II on the ground in every way."⁸⁰ This caution turned out to be warranted. On May 25, the MONUC expressed concerns about troop movements made by the forces of the Ugandan-backed MLC along the Oubangui River and around Mbandaka. The MONUC

noted that the MLC advance violated the Lusaka ceasefire and the April 8 Kampala disengagement plan. The MLC's troop movements seriously compromised the ability of peacekeeping forces to deploy rapidly. Kamal Morjane called on the MLC to cease all military activities that could disrupt the efforts to enforce the ceasefire.⁸¹ As Kofi Annan was consulting with the signatories as advocated by the Security Council, everyone's worst fears were realized: a new wave of fighting broke out on June 8 between Rwandan and Ugandan forces in Kisangani.⁸²

To restart the stalled deployment of a UN peacekeeping force, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, former president of Nigeria, was appointed as a special envoy of the secretary general in the DRC on August 18, 2000, supplementing the already extended position held by Kamel Morjane. The secretary general sent Abubakar to the area to once more clarify the role of the Security Council and the MONUC in the process.⁸³ After talks with Kabila, Morjane announced on August 25 that Kabila had accepted the deployment of UN troops in zones held by government troops. This came as a surprise, because Kabila had recently declared a suspension of the Lusaka accord.⁸⁴ On August 30, the DRC authorities warned that a quick troop deployment was not possible because the Security Council still had to assess the situation and, in addition, could not sanction the deployment of South African troops in government-held areas. These demands drastically slowed down the planned deployment because the UN had to find troops from other countries. The DRC foreign minister, Yerodia, announced on September 3 that Pakistan, Morocco, and Senegal would provide the troops for the 5,500-member peacekeeping force.⁸⁵

On November 14, 2000, nine African states proposed the deployment of an independent African peacekeeping force to pave the way for the withdrawal of the five foreign armies involved in the DRC.⁸⁶ On November 23, Morjane denounced recent ceasefire violations in the country, noting that those in the Katanga province were of great concern. He did not provide details, but other sources observed that Rwandan-backed rebels of the RCD had recaptured the town of Pepa. Morjane said that the current fighting was "useless" and that it threatened all regional stability.⁸⁷ The seemingly eroding situation at last reversed on November 27 when the DRC government agreed to resume talks on the continued deployment of the UN observer mission.⁸⁸ As of that date, only 245 observers from the 5,500-member force were deployed in the DRC, led by General Mountaga Diallo of Senegal.⁸⁹ Demonstrating the UN's commitment to the Congolese peace process, Kofi Annan recommended on December 7 that the MONUC mandate be extended through June 15.⁹⁰

On December 14, 2000, the Security Council at last agreed to deploy UN military observers to monitor and verify the disengagement of forces

along the battle lines in the DRC. It left it to the discretion of the secretary general to propose other measures to assist the parties in carrying out the Lusaka agreement, including the possible deployment of UN troops.⁹¹ But DRC authorities remained obstructive. Kabila continued to state publicly that allowing free movement of the MONUC peacekeeping force amounted to a violation of Congolese sovereignty. Meanwhile, on December 29, the UN Security Council urged the armies of Rwanda and Uganda to respect the ceasefire and withdraw from Katanga and Equateur provinces immediately.⁹²

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LUSAKA AGREEMENT: THE INTER-CONGOLESE DIALOGUE

Securing a ceasefire was not the only step needed to implement the Lusaka peace agreement. Organizing a national dialogue between Congolese factions in order to reach “a new political dispensation” was another major objective of this agreement. The JPC led by Amama Mbabazi was charged with finding ways to bring the Congolese parties to the negotiating table. Both the JPC and the JMC were created by the Lusaka negotiations in July 1999. On September 3, 1999, the chairman, Amama Mbabazi, convened a JPC meeting, including representatives from the RCD and other rebel groups. But tangible steps toward a real dialogue between Congolese parties began on September 21, 1999, when three foreign mediators arrived in Kinshasa to help plan a national forum that would determine the political future of the DRC.

On September 23, Ernest Wamba dia Wamba’s RCD-Kisangani faction announced that it favored the Rome-based Catholic Community of Sant’ Egidio “as the sole neutral facilitator of the national dialogue” but might be open to including other neutral observers.⁹³ But on September 24, the Goma faction of the RCD rejected all the three proposed facilitators of the national debate.⁹⁴ All efforts to find a facilitator came to a halt. As of October 12, there was still no sign of progress.⁹⁵ At its October 18 meeting, the JPC urged the Congolese parties, with the assistance of the OAU, to “expedite consultations on the appointment of a neutral facilitator for the ‘Inter-Congolese Dialogue.’” The JPC stressed that it should happen as soon as possible.⁹⁶ The RCD-ML continued to insist on either the Sant’ Egidio Community or the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie as the only acceptable choice for “sole neutral facilitator.” But the RCD-Goma rejected both, saying that it wanted “a college of facilitators composed of African personalities whose moral integrity and independence are unquestioned.” Further confusion ensued when, on November 10, 1999, the DRC government convened its own national debate without participation from delegates of the rebel-held areas of the country. Efforts to organize an

all-inclusive national dialogue stalled as the OAU searched desperately for a facilitator acceptable to all sides.⁹⁷

On December 3, 1999, Nelson Mandela's name was put forward for the facilitator job, but he declined because he has already accepted the position of mediator of the Burundian conflict.⁹⁸ Frustrated by these difficulties, Ambassador Holbrooke embarked on a mission to Africa on December 9 to find a facilitator. During his visit to Lusaka he encouraged the OAU at its meeting in Addis Ababa the following week to also deal with the facilitator issue.⁹⁹ On December 13 countries backing Kabila also expressed concern over the fact that the mediator acceptable to all parties was not found yet.¹⁰⁰ Finally, on December 15, the OAU secretary general Ahmed Salim—following consultations with the DRC government, the RCD-Goma, and the RCD-ML—announced that the parties had agreed that former president of Botswana Sir Ketumile Masire should assume the role of neutral facilitator. The rebel groups perceived this agreement as a victory. Almost immediately, the RCD rebel group urged Masire to set up a “time-table of consultations” with the regime in Kinshasa either in Mauritius, Ethiopia, South Africa, or Botswana.¹⁰¹ In support of this development, U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright pledged \$1 million toward the Inter-Congolese Dialogue on January 25, 2000.¹⁰²

In January, Masire made his first visit to the DRC to set up headquarters and immediately began consulting with the DRC government, armed oppositional groups, oppositional political groups, and other civil organizations to discuss the country's future. In this first visit, the atmosphere was friendly and positive. On January 28, Masire declared that his first task as Congo facilitator will be to “get all the key players in the crisis to sit down” for a general discussion. This meant creating a dialogue between the armed forces, political leaders, and members of civil society in hopes of hashing out an arrangement that could make Congo a viable state.¹⁰³ On February 22, Masire sat down with Uganda's Yoweri Museveni to discuss implementation of the Lusaka protocol; he also met with RCD rebels in Kampala and Kigali. He asked the ambassador of Botswana in Lusaka to meet with Jean-Pierre Bemba of the MLC, and Masire himself spoke to Bemba by phone. Up to this point, all parties appeared to favor the dialogue; Masire then headed to South Africa to meet with authorities there. He had received enough funding to continue his activities and had also acquired the means to travel by plane. Masire met with many other key players, including the Angolan president, Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, and twice briefed the Security Council.

After these extensive consultations, Masire returned to Botswana and then to the DRC in March. During this second visit, things were very different. Indeed, on March 24, 2000, several sources reported that Masire was prevented by the Congolese authorities from leaving Kinshasa to

travel to rebel-held towns of Gbadolite, Bunia, and Goma. Because of this action, Masire accused Kabila of being an obstacle to peace. In retaliation, “Congo’s peacemaker” was essentially driven out of the country only three months after being appointed. Masire abruptly departed from Kinshasa in March, accusing the government of trying to derail the negotiations and depicting Kabila’s announcement of a new national assembly as an effort to sabotage the dialogue. Masire returned to Botswana to regroup. And in the meantime, the DRC government began sending mixed messages about its commitment to the peace process.

On April 12, 2000, the DRC government publicly reaffirmed its commitment to hold an inter-Congolese dialogue as outlined by the Lusaka protocol’s timetable. The government warned that any postponement beyond this timetable would force the DRC government to leave the Lusaka peace process. Despite the problems with Kabila’s government, Masire hoped to start the dialogue “within a month or two.” He remained confident that the peace would hold and that all the parties involved would eventually take part in the negotiations.¹⁰⁴ Yet problems continued to afflict the organization of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. Indeed, on April 17, 2000, Masire met with the OAU head, Salim Ahmed Salim, to discuss the Inter-Congolese Dialogue’s financial problems. The many pledges for funds had yet to be honored, and Masire had reached the point where the lack of funds was beginning to jeopardize the process.¹⁰⁵ In addition, the fragile peace looked as if it might begin to fray. On April 26, RCD-Goma condemned the rejection by Kabila’s government of the multiple propositions put forth by Masire.¹⁰⁶ But just a day after RCD-Goma’s announcement, Masire provided some optimism by announcing that all the parties to the conflict had completed the preliminary phase of consultations setting the ground rules for the dialogue. Masire was now preparing a work plan for the next phase, which was figuring out how the dialogue between the parties would actually function.¹⁰⁷ Having been pushed out of Kinshasa in March, Masire returned to the DRC on May 10, 2000, to continue where he had left off. This third visit began with an explanation as to why the dialogue was so late in starting.¹⁰⁸

Masire attempted to make preparatory contacts with Kabila, who refused to answer his questions, saying that Masire should meet first with the armed opposition and then come back to him with conclusions of those dialogues. Masire continued his meetings with members of human rights groups, oppositional politicians, and other groups. Masire finally traveled to Goma on May 15, 2000, to meet with the rebels of the RCD-Goma.¹⁰⁹ He was also planning to go to Gbadolite and Bunia.¹¹⁰ After these consultations, he planned to meet with a small group to synchronize different answers and have some definitive choice of the meeting place. The DRC government oppositional groups were scheduled to meet with Masire on June 5 through 7 to work out

details for holding full negotiations, which were targeted to start on July 3. Up to this point, the following cities had been suggested for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue: Kinshasa, Lusaka, Gaborone, Port St. Louis, Maputo, Nairobi, Addis Ababa, and Cairo. Kabila wanted it to take place in Kinshasa and the rebels favored a different venue. Masire did not have a preference—only that it should be a place that all Congolese factions could agree upon—but he did articulate his two different visions for how the dialogue would work. The worst case scenario would be a two-round structure: two weeks for a round of talks, two weeks to reflect on what took place, and two weeks to end the talks. To Masire's mind, the best possible scenario would be an uninterrupted forty-five-day meeting. He felt that most parties would prefer to complete the negotiations in one long session.¹¹¹

On May 30, the negotiators announced that a three-day preparatory meeting would take place in Cotonou, the largest city in Benin, from June 5 through 7. The aim of this meeting was to create the conditions necessary for the national dialogue.¹¹² Masire invited the representatives of the DRC government, the political opposition, the armed opposition, and civil society. The DRC government soon undermined this meeting by suddenly pulling out of it. The meeting's aims were to decide upon a venue for the dialogue, to determine the types of representation required, and settling on the structure of the dialogue and its procedural rules. The Congolese government not only refused to send representatives to Cotonou but also prevented participants from leaving Kinshasa. Kamel Morjane was ready to take all the participants to Cotonou but was prevented from doing so by Congolese authorities.¹¹³ The situation grew even bleaker on June 4 when the DRC openly called for the removal of Masire as the neutral facilitator.¹¹⁴ On June 8, not surprisingly, Masire announced the postponement of the Cotonou meeting. Then without warning, on June 21, DRC police shut down Masire's Kinshasa office. A DRC government official accused Masire of "deciding unilaterally without any consultations, without making any contact with us whatsoever, to go to Cotonou."

As massive international pressure mounted, the DRC interior minister, Gaetan Kakudji, announced on June 26 that Masire's office would be reopened, although the government stated that it still could not work with Masire as the facilitator. Kakudji stated, "The government of public salvation wishes to reassure the public and the international community that it is not opposed to the organization of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, but that it refuses to have Ketumile Masire as the facilitator, because of his partiality." He also accused powerful nations of trying to use the Inter-Congolese Dialogue as a means to depose the government and "rehabilitate the Mobutists in the name of national reconciliation."

THE FOUNDERING PEACE PROCESS

There were many diplomatic attempts to salvage the foundering Lusaka peace agreement. One of the first was a mini-summit organized by Muammar Gaddafi in Libya on December 23, 1999. This meeting led to the signing of a normalizing accord between Yoweri Museveni's Ugandan government and Kabila's government.¹¹⁵ Roughly a month later, U.S. UN ambassador Holbrooke orchestrated a major summit of the DRC belligerents in New York City. Despite some stringent preconditions made by Kabila, all the belligerent parties attended the gathering. Even President Kabila and RCD leader Emile Ilunga participated in a special session of the UN Security Council.¹¹⁶ Kofi Annan believed that diplomatic activities could still resolve the crisis.¹¹⁷ At that gathering, all the speakers called for the full implementation of the Lusaka agreement.

On February 4, 2000, JPC leader Amama Mbabazi announced that a summit of regional heads of state was being planned for that month in hopes of building on the progress of January's Security Council meeting held in New York. But this appeal came at a time when the situation in the DRC itself was rapidly deteriorating. On February 1, none other than Kofi Annan publicly expressed his fear that the Lusaka peace process was falling apart due to the resumption of hostilities.¹¹⁸ UN officials suspected Libya, North Korea, Cuba, and the Sudan of fueling the chaos in the region by selling weapons and funding various armed factions who controlled access to strategic mineral sources.¹¹⁹ These findings prompted Ambassador Holbrooke to seek congressional support for the UN mission in the DRC in hopes of bringing an end to this potentially explosive international situation.¹²⁰

To capitalize on this momentum, a mini-summit was called in Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe on April 25, 2000. The leaders of Namibia, Mozambique, Uganda, and Zimbabwe attended, as did Rwanda's foreign minister.¹²¹ Once again the complex military situation on the ground prevented substantial progress from being made. The Victoria Falls gathering was immediately followed by another summit organized by the OAU in Algiers on April 30. Algeria, which was chairing the OAU at this point, gathered the heads of state of the DRC, Zambia, Mozambique, Mali, South Africa, and Nigeria and also invited Ketumile Masire. The six African leaders urged the UN to speed up the deployment of 5,500 peacekeepers.¹²² Following the Algiers summit, in early May, Richard Holbrooke led a Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region. The seven-member delegation arrived in Kinshasa on May 4 and also visited Kigali, Harare, and Kampala. The mission focused on the ceasefire, the safety and mobility of UN personnel in the DRC, and the relocation of the JMC to Kinshasa and its establishment as a permanently sitting body.¹²³ It was apparent to UN officials and other observers that the

maintenance of the ceasefire largely relied on international funding, support, and diplomatic pressure. To sustain the Security Council's mission goals, U.S. special envoy to the Great Lakes Howard Volpe stayed behind to continue to meet with DRC government officials.¹²⁴

In response to this diplomatic engagement, Kabila's military staff called upon the MONUC and the JMC to act rapidly in the application of the ceasefire, to take reprisals against rebel aggressors (especially the MLC), and to speed up the process of disengagement. This new attitude of cooperation emanating from Kinshasa was also reflected in a missive sent on May 15. For the first time, Kabila sent an emissary, Mwenze Kongolo, to Kigali with a message expressing his desire to end the war quickly and hope to maintain direct relations with Rwanda. The Security Council again seized this momentum and invited the signatories of the Lusaka protocol to New York on June 15, 2000.¹²⁵ The meeting, which brought all of the combatants together, did not solve the problem of ceasefire violations committed by Rwandan and Ugandan forces in Kisangani. The UN has told the two warring factions that it would not deploy UN troops in the DRC until there was a credible ceasefire in that area. On June 16, 2000, the UN Security Council, perhaps responding to the entreaties of Kabila's government, ratcheted up the pressure, accusing Uganda and Rwanda of violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the DRC, and calling for two countries to withdraw their troops without further delay.¹²⁶

On August 14, a summit aimed at salvaging the Lusaka process opened in Lusaka. Rebel groups and external parties claimed that the success of the negotiations relied entirely on Kabila. They accused Kabila of holding the whole process hostage through his opposition to Masire as facilitator. Rwandan diplomat Patrick Mazhimhaka said of Kabila, "How can he doubt Sir Ketumile's ability to facilitate the talks when he has not been given a chance to prove himself?" On the agenda of the August 14 summit was the implementation of the ceasefire and the deployment of peacekeepers. The first phase of the UN mission, in which deployment of 500 military observers and 5,000 peacekeepers was planned, had been stalled over Kabila's refusal to allow UN troops to deploy in Kinshasa and Mbandaka.¹²⁷ Even after a mammoth session on Monday that extended well into the night, Kabila refused to budge on the issues of Masire as facilitator and granting UN peacekeepers unhindered access to all regions of the DRC. Kabila even insisted on proposing alternative facilitators: F.W. de Klerk, Kenneth Kaunda, Cyril Ramaphosa, and Abdou Diouf. These four names were rejected outright by the rest of the participants. Overall, this Lusaka session was not a success due to Kabila's intransigence. But the external signatories and the rebels did reach consensus on four key issues: (1) the restoration of the Kampala ceasefire; (2) the implementation of the Kampala disengagement plan;

(3) the provision of the necessary security and access guarantees to UN military observers; and (4) the support for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue under the guidance of Masire.

Another intriguing development at the Lusaka meeting was that Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, one of Kabila's strongest allies, applied some pressure on Kabila to allow the deployment of peacekeepers, thereby facilitating the withdrawal of the sizable contingent of Zimbabwean troops estimated at around 15,000. Zimbabwe's economic crisis had made the intervention increasingly unpopular back at home. A foreign currency shortage and fuel price increases were some of the factors contributing to dissatisfaction among Zimbabweans with the continued spending on the DRC conflict. The government has admitted spending \$3 million a month on its military deployment in the DRC.¹²⁸ Yet as the Lusaka meeting drew to a close on August 18, 2000, Mugabe's pressure yielded no results. Kabila still refused to make concessions on the issues of Masire as facilitator and unlimited access for UN peacekeepers. He refused to talk or even listen to any argument on the subject.¹²⁹

On August 24, the DRC human rights minister, Leonard She Okitundu, announced that the government had officially suspended the Lusaka agreement. This decision led to Kabila's isolation on the international scene, and the unambiguous perception that he had become an obstacle to peace. On August 29, the DRC foreign affairs minister, Yerodia Ndombasi, once again called for the revision of the ceasefire agreement, stating that the "obsolete Lusaka agreement should be amended now if the process to end war was to be speeded up." For Yerodia the chief amendment was to name Uganda and Rwanda as aggressors.¹³⁰ On September 22, the stalled Lusaka process not only endangered the security in the DRC but also contributed to the destabilization of the entire central African region as the DRC conflict spilled over into the Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic.¹³¹

Diplomatic consultations continued in November despite the seemingly hopeless situation. Muammar Gaddafi arranged a meeting of ministers in Libya early in the month, which was followed by an initiative by the Belgian deputy minister for foreign affairs, Annemie Neyts. She arrived in Kigali from the Ugandan capital on November 14 for a two-day official visit, part of a seven-day mission in the region with the stated objective of reactivating and assessing the Lusaka agreement. She was eager to understand why the Lusaka agreement had been so difficult to implement. Soon after this tour, MONUC head Kamel Morjane held a press conference in Kinshasa on December 21 calling for all warring parties in the DRC to renew the Lusaka agreement. He said that Congolese people themselves should shoulder the primary responsibility for ending the conflict. The recent wave of diplomatic efforts toward a solution to the Congolese conflict, particularly in Algiers, Tripoli, Kinshasa, Windhoek,

and Maputo, was proof that no country was indifferent to what was happening in the DRC. He urged the parties to resume a political dialogue toward a solution to the ongoing crisis.¹³² Also, in December, President Omar Bongo of Gabon tried his hand at revivifying Lusaka but was frustrated in the attempt. The Libreville meeting scheduled for December 21 was postponed because no representatives of the main rebel opposition would attend.¹³³

Reports of an assassination attempt on Laurent-Désiré Kabila circulated on January 17, 2001, threatening to throw the DRC into a state of chaos. Ketumile Masire's office issued a statement regretting the reported attempt on Kabila's life. In the immediate aftermath, Zimbabwean officials approached the Ugandan government to try forging the next step toward peace. Ugandan officials affirmed that they wished to move forward with the implementation of the Lusaka accord, no matter how the situation with the DRC leadership played out. The Ugandans also condemned assassination as a means of regime change. The three Congolese rebel groups also called for adhering to the Lusaka agreement in these new circumstances. Kabila had consistently tried to block the implementation of the agreement, particularly at the point when the national dialogue was to be organized. With Kabila now apparently out of the picture, the Lusaka process gained new life.

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Violations of the Ceasefire Agreement

MILITARY ACTIVITIES: THE NORTHERN FRONT

From the signing of the Lusaka agreement on July 11, 1999 through the death of Kabila on January 16, 2001, the ceasefire agreement that supposedly brought all fighting to a halt was shattered repeatedly, and with alarming regularity. Just one day after the signing, MLC rebel leader Jean-Pierre Bemba stated that pro-government aggression had taken place in the Equateur province. According to Bemba, Kabila ordered Sudanese jets to bomb MLC forces in Gbadolite as well as rebel positions in Ikela, and the DRC army seemed to be positioning itself for further offensives.¹ Rebel groups thus did not feel bound by the ceasefire and launched a series of counterattacks. On July 15, Bemba announced that the town of Gemena has fallen into MLC control, even further degrading the state of the ceasefire.² The MLC rebels committed further violations on July 23 by advancing on the northwestern town of Zongo, across the border from the CAR capital Bangui, from the direction of Gemena and Libenge.³

Government troops went on the offensive again by shelling rebel positions in Djombo and Lusengo, two small towns about 850 kilometers (530 miles) northeast of Kinshasa, on July 27, 1999. Bemba, speaking about Djombo, stated, "Yesterday they shelled our positions while our soldiers were in a defensive posture. . . . We replied, shelling and ambushing them, and killed twenty-one soldiers." He added that government troops had launched a separate attack on Lusengo, a small town along the Congo River, noting that three government soldiers were killed and one rebel soldier was wounded in the clash.⁴ The attacks on Djombo and Lusengo marked an intensification of offensives by government forces, in direct violation of the Lusaka agreement.

On August 4, 1999, Ugandan-backed MLC positions in the Equateur province came under attack by air, resulting in horrific casualties: nearly 600 people were reported to have been killed. According to Bemba,

Kabila's forces dropped eighteen bombs on the towns of Makanza and Bogbonga, claiming 384 civilians and 184 soldiers.⁵ Sudanese planes had carried out this raid.⁶ Bemba was surprised by this massive attack and complained, "Since my troops were in a defensive position and we had signed a ceasefire, we didn't expect to be bombed."⁷ Ugandan officials confirmed the attack on the two northeastern DRC towns and said that the majority of soldiers killed were Ugandans and noted that they would have to retaliate.⁸ Tensions in the region continued to escalate on August 23, 1999, due to the presence of 5,600 DRC government soldiers in the Mobaye area of the Central African Republic, just across the Ubangi River from the DRC town of Gbadolite. These soldiers, along with 4,000 civilians, had crossed the river into the area in July as MLC troops pushed into the Equateur province. The DRC soldiers had been raping local women, looting property, and stealing crops, becoming a potential source of destabilization in the CAR.⁹

The fight in Equateur became even more intense when, on September 16, 1999, Ugandan forces in the DRC backing the rebels made the decision to move their headquarters from Kisangani to Gbadolite to better deal with ongoing fighting in Equateur. The DRC government saw such a move as constituting not only a scorn for the DRC but also an insult to the international community that had invested so much time and effort in attempting to implement the Lusaka agreement.¹⁰

On November 26, 1999, the fighting intensified in Equateur as Kabila promised to free the country from the rebels by the end of the millennium.¹¹ That same day, MLC rebels attacked the towns of Isanga-Yengi, Bolungawema, Dembo, Makanza, and Bolinga and surrounded the town of Mbandaka, which was still held by government troops.¹² The MLC also took control of the town of Basankusu, northeast of Mbandaka, and established headquarters there.¹³ On December 2, Kabila's forces and their allies attempted to take control of the small town of Bongandanga, some 150 kilometers (about 93 miles) east of Basankusu, in order to continue northeastward to the strategically important city of Lisala. But they failed to do so, with the MLC capturing 120 government soldiers.

Despite these setbacks, Kabila's forces managed to take control of the strategically significant city of Bokungu on December 3, 1999, pushing out RCD-Goma forces.¹⁴ This town in southeastern Equateur lay between Boende and Ikela on the Tshuapa River. The assault was carried out by four helicopters, three gunboats, as well as bombers, forcing the rebels to pull back to a new defensive line. Many observers described this wave of fighting as the worst since the signing of the ceasefire. The rebels tried to prevent DRC and Zimbabwean forces from moving eastward since rebel forces were laying siege to the government-held town of Ikela further southeast on the Tshuapa River. There the forces allied with Kabila were trapped at the airport with rebels bombarding them and trying to

cut their supply lines. Ikela had been described as a zone controlled by the DRC government through the Lusaka agreement.¹⁵ Kabila's general offensive on November 26 included a push into Ikela with two gunboats and two helicopter gunships in an attempt to relieve the besieged troops.¹⁶ Zimbabwean forces also vowed to continue bombing rebel positions until they liberated the troops pinned down at the Ikela airport and also managed to parachute food supplies to them. The Ikela fighting was threatening to erupt into total war, which would likely endanger the lives of thousands, including those of the besieged soldiers.

Steps to defuse this potentially explosive situation were taken on December 8, when high-level delegations from Zimbabwe, Rwanda, and the RCD-Goma signed an agreement in Kigali to end heavy fighting in the Ikela-Bokungu region. The agreement allowed the Kabila-allied troops trapped behind rebel lines at the Ikela airport to obtain food and water. In exchange, Kabila's forces would withdraw from the town of Bokungu.¹⁷ On January 24, 2000, the rebel siege of Ikela lifted, thus removing a major obstacle to the implementation of the Lusaka process. Frustratingly, the terms of the ceasefire were violated yet again almost immediately. A large contingent of Zimbabwean forces pushed into the Ikela airport and succeeded in rejoining with the troops who had been besieged there for six months.

The situation in Ikela was just one example of many ceasefire violations that began to erupt within the Equateur province. Outside of the Ikela area, allied forces continued to push hard against rebel positions. On December 13, 1999, the MLC lost the northwestern town of Nkonya to government troops. MLC leader Bemba claimed that fighting for the town left 119 government soldiers and two rebels dead.¹⁸ On January 6, 2000, allied forces assaulted the rebel-held fishing village of Kuka. According to the rebels, a counterattack by the MLC forces led to the death of 150 loyalist soldiers. Rebels also claimed that they had killed an additional sixty government troops in an ambush on the Congo River near Libanga.¹⁹ Five days later, Kabila's forces retook Kwalungu and Gwaluru in Equateur.²⁰ According to a DRC official, government soldiers attacked RCD positions south of Ikela at Idumbe and Kole as well.²¹

The spring did bring some eruptions of violence outside of Equateur. On April 6, 2000, RCD-Goma announced that Kabila's forces had attacked several RCD positions in Katanga, the Kivus, and Kasai—as well as Equateur—since March 20.²² But the most serious violence occurred in Equateur: on May 8, the government attacked MLC positions in Imese on the banks of the Ubangi River from a gunboat.²³ On May 11, an allied Antonov aircraft dropped three bombs close to Gbadolite's airport, although there were no casualties or damages. There were also reports that MLC and government forces had engaged near Umongo and Uburu in Equateur.²⁴

A lull in the fighting lasted through most of August, but toward the end of the month the DRC government announced that it was suspending its participation in the ceasefire accord. It proceeded to keep its word. On September 1, 2000, government troops renewed their offensive in Equateur, surrounding the town of Libenge just south of Zongo on the Ubangi River.²⁵ The fighting reached a massive scale on September 13, with government troops deploying on the Zongo-Libenge axis along the Ubangi River to prevent Rwandan and Ugandan troops from advancing.²⁶ Sporadic fighting continued through September, and on October 3, allied bombs fell on Gemena during a celebration of the second anniversary of the MLC, injuring five people.²⁷ Three days later, the MLC accused the government of dropping bombs in the village of Kanongo in the northwest. Government forces continued air raids on various rebel-controlled towns such as Basankusu, Libanga, Makanza, Zongo, and Waka.²⁸ MLC secretary general Olivier Kamitatu explained, "Since our forces completely defeated those of the government on the Ubangi River, the latter are concentrating all their efforts on the Congo River." MLC-held areas such as Kanongo had thus come under heavy attack with the government using heavy artillery.²⁹ The MLC also countered with assaults on allied forces near Boende on the Tshuapa River and at Bomongo at the Ngiri River.³⁰ As of December 27, 2000, Kabila's forces continued to bomb MLC positions in the northwest. Towns such as Zongo and Nganda-Paris near the Congo River were bombarded by Zimbabwean MIGs, which dropped 250 kilograms of bombs each time. This bombing campaign was a tactic aimed at cutting rebel supply lines. The airports at Gbadolite, Zongo, and Gemena were targeted as well.³¹ On January 2, 2001, a Zimbabwean MIG attempted to bomb MLC positions at Basankusu.³² The MLC claimed to have shot down one of the planes, but DRC forces denied this.³³

In December, regional analysts noted that the situation in the DRC had taken a turn for the worse since September with a two-front offensive launched by government forces: one in the northwest in the Equateur province, and another in the southeast in the Katanga province. The MLC requested help from its allies in the face of this new pressure, and they responded: a contingent of ex-FAZ (former members of Mobutu's army) and Angolan UNITA rebels arrived in Gbadolite. Following this buildup, Bemba's forces recaptured the town of Libanga on January 11, 2000. Bemba also claimed to have retaken positions near the town of Nkonya, which the DRC army had captured recently. On February 4, 2000, the RCD announced that it had retaken positions in Bokungu. And on February 18, reports surfaced that MLC reinforcements were headed to Mbandaka followed by a flow of refugees.³⁴

The MLC launched an offensive on May 5, 2000 and seized the strategic town of Ikembe, 500 miles northeast of Kinshasa on the Oubangui River. With these actions, the DRC government accused the MLC of

violating the ceasefire. MLC rebels continued to make significant gains by advancing southward along the Oubangui River as far as Buburu and Bomongo by May 17.³⁵

As of August 17, observers noted that almost 200 violations of the ceasefire had occurred in the Equateur province, with intense fighting between Kabila and his allies and the Ugandan-backed MLC.³⁶ Throughout the month, the rebels kept pushing. On September 13, they finally recaptured the northwestern town of Zongo from FAC troops, killing 43 and capturing 123. The Congolese minister of defense accused Ugandan and Rwandan forces of violating the ceasefire by occupying new territories after the Lusaka and the Kampala accords. The MLC offensive continued to push, and by October 10, rebel forces had surrounded the government-held town of Mbandaka (700 kilometers north of Kinshasa). One DRC official stated, “The Bemba group supported by Uganda in Equateur are in complete violation. They are now trying to take over Mbandaka.”³⁷ On October 13, Kabila pledged to defend Mbandaka. A government news agency warned that a full-scale war with Uganda “would break out if the Kampala-backed MLC rebels do not stop their advance to Mbandaka.” The Namibian president, Sam Nujoma, a firm ally of Kabila, stated, “We will not allow Mbandaka to fall.”³⁸

By the fall of 2000, both sides had engaged in numerous ceasefire violations in Equateur, but the rebels had managed to push their advantage against the government after the agreement.

MILITARY ACTIVITIES: THE CENTRAL FRONT

Both sides committed similar violations along the front lines in the Kasai province in the central region of the DRC. On September 2, 1999—only two days after the RCD signed the Lusaka agreement—Kabila’s forces took control of the town of Dekese, which previously had been under rebel control.³⁹ This attack marked the renewal of fighting in the eastern Kasai province and represented a serious breach of the ceasefire agreement.⁴⁰ The rebels also became involved in ceasefire violations as early as September 20, 1999. Residents in the central Kasai region spoke of regular troop movements heading for the front lines. Kinshasa immediately accused the rebels and Rwanda of preparing an offensive in Kasai, targeting Mbuji-Mayi. On September 22, it was announced that the RCD-Goma rebels were amassing troops and military equipment at Kole and Lodja, creating a very tense situation. On September 29, reports surfaced that Rwandan troops were being sent by air to Lodja and that they were moving in the direction of Mbuji-Mayi.⁴¹ These rebel troops attacked the village of Kamilala near Manono on October 11 and eventually captured the town of Idumbe in Kasai Occidental, some 600 kilometers

(about 375 miles) east of Kinshasa by March 20, 2000. Between 150 and 200 government and allied soldiers were killed during this rebel offensive.

Kabila's forces did not stand by idly during this rebel push into the central provinces. On October 11, 1999, observers noted that Kabila's forces were amassing around Manono and Monsosa in the region where the borders of Kasai Oriental, Maniema, and Katanga provinces meet. A local Maniema NGO announced that civilians in the provincial capital of Kindu joined those in the South Kivu capital of Bakavu in a civil disobedience campaign in support of Kabila and against the RCD rebels on February 23, 2000. The statement said that protesters in Maniema denounced "killings and looting by the RCD and foreign forces." This was followed on March 20 by a warning of the FAC chief of staff Eddy Kapend that there would be reprisals against the rebels in Kasai Occidental in response to their frequent attacks. On April 3, 2000, the DRC government launched attacks against the Katangan towns of Kisele and Maloba. RCD-Goma forces declared that they had killed twenty DRC army soldiers while repelling these attacks. RCD-Goma spokesman Kin-Kiey Mulumba provocatively stated, "We fight every day; there is no ceasefire."

In the spring of 2000, ceasefire violations were concentrated in Kasai Oriental, especially in the vicinity of Mbuji-Mayi and Kabinda, as well as around Kananga in Kasai Occidental.⁴² By the fall of 2000, Kabila became determined to bring the central provinces firmly under his control. On October 14, 2000, government troops launched a major general offensive on all fronts against the RCD and the MLC in Kasai Oriental, Equateur, and Katanga.

MILITARY ACTIVITIES: THE SOUTHERN FRONT

While Equateur and Kasai provinces proved to be the major centers of conflict after the signing of the ceasefire, some serious fighting also took place in Katanga, in part due to its proximity to Rwanda. Indeed, on September 27, 1999, observers reported that Rwandan troops and military equipment were moving into the town of Moba along the coast of Lake Tanganyika. Two Burundian ships had transported these troops and equipment across the lake.⁴³ Soon afterward, these forces and their rebel allies clashed with government forces for three straight days around October 6, the first fighting in the region since a ceasefire had taken effect on September 1.⁴⁴ The Rwandan-backed rebel forces launched attacks against a government position in Kapongo, roughly 1,525 kilometers (950 miles) east of Kinshasa. They also attacked near Kamilala, some fifty kilometers (thirty miles) from Manono, the latter having been seized by the rebels in early June.⁴⁵ Because of the intensification of the fighting, the RCD-Goma announced on November 19, 1999, that it

would move its military headquarters from Goma to Kalemie in the Katanga province.⁴⁶

Allied forces also committed numerous ceasefire violations on the southern front, especially in the spring of 2000. On March 24, 2000, the government launched its own offensive in northern Katanga along the line between Kabalo and Kongolo, with the rebels claiming that it was a “pre-planned large-scale offensive action.”⁴⁷ Kabila’s forces kept driving into the southern sector over the summer, pushing into the area between Kabinda and Kabalo by August 4, 2000. On August 9, heavy fighting between DRC government troops and Rwandan-backed rebels was reported in Pepa in the southeastern Katanga. Rebel officer Major Ndahiro stated, “Kabila’s troops and his allies attacked us on Tuesday at Pepa, but we managed to push them back. This attack on our legitimate positions recognized by the Lusaka agreement is a setback to the peace process, and we cannot predict what is going to follow.” The southern front had not experienced major conflict since the signing of the Lusaka agreement the previous year, thus the renewal of fighting during the summer of 2000 marked a major degradation of stability in the region. Further fighting seemed inevitable since government troops had deployed two battalions between Kalemie and Moba and the area controlled by the Rwandan and RCD-Goma troops.⁴⁸

In the late summer and early fall of 2000, government troops burnt villages and killed civilians as they attacked RCD positions in Katanga. Rebels acknowledged a government attack on October 14 on their positions in Kontaula, and on October 24, allied aircraft killed nine civilians in an air raid in southeastern Katanga. They bombarded the town of Moba, while the nearby town of Kalungu was hit by homemade bombs dropped from several of Kabila’s Antonov aircrafts, killing fourteen people and wounding at least four.⁴⁹ These air attacks presaged an assault on Pepa by DRC forces, which overtook the town on October 27, 2000. Regarding Pepa, one RCD soldier said that “the town and the airport have recently fallen into the hands of Kabila’s forces and their allies.” Other government offensives took place on the lake at Moba, where Kabila’s forces used barges on Lake Tanganyika equipped with artillery and heavy machine guns, which allowed them to attack rebel positions.

Irritated by these developments, the Rwandan foreign minister, Andre Buyama, warned, “If the international community does nothing to make Kabila’s government see reason and respect the spirit and letter of Lusaka, and if the situation get worse, we will order our troops on the ground to respond.” The government’s aggressive posture, using long-range artillery, tanks, bombers, and boats along the Lake Tanganyika shore, forced the RCD and Rwandan forces into a defensive position.⁵⁰

Yet in early November 2000, the rebels and their allies began to regroup and push back. RCD-Goma forces recaptured Pepa on

November 3. According to the rebel officer Norbert Basengezi, “The RCD troops killed thirty-five government soldiers and seized a cache of weapons and army vehicles. Three RCD soldiers were killed and five other were injured.” He added, “This push came as no surprise; the FAC had seized control of Pepa and Moba last month and thus a Rwandan-led counterattack was inevitable.”⁵¹ On November 17, 2000, heavy fighting was reported in Katanga between allied forces and the Rwandan-backed RCD forces. Rebel spokesman Mulumba stated, “Kabila attacked us and took many villages, and now we are defending our positions.” He further noted that the fighting came as RCD-Goma forces moved out of disputed villages to open the way for the the UN peacekeeping mission. He claimed that as soon as the rebels pulled out, government forces and its *Mayi-Mayi*, *Interahamwe*, and Burundian allies moved in and began killing civilians and capturing the villages, leading the rebels to respond.

The RCD rebels pursued their counterattack in Katanga in December. On December 18, 2000, the rebels backed by Rwandan forces fought to cut off supply lines to DRC troops near the Zambian border. Because of these clashes, up to 4,000 of Kabila’s soldiers and 60,000 civilians crossed the border into Zambia. Zambian troops placed these DRC soldiers into four schools in the northern province of Nchelenge to prevent them from destabilizing the border area and succeeded in disarming them after several days of resistance.⁵² The rebels also advanced toward Moliro, the main southern Katangan access point to Lake Tanganyika, capturing the town on December 28, 2000.⁵³ On December 29, government forces attacked RCD-RPA positions in the three towns of Nyunzu, Kasinge, and Manono. The offensive was aimed at countering the rebels’ move toward Pweto.⁵⁴ The Zimbabwean president, Robert Mugabe, threatened to mount an offensive against the rebels if they failed to withdraw from this area, and he backed up his words with an aerial attack around Pweto that killed two people. Yet the forces allied with Kabila could not prevent the rebels and their allies from capturing Pweto on January 5, 2001. During the fighting, the RPA shot down a Zimbabwean MIG jet fighter and captured significant quantities of military equipment, including several tanks, armored personnel carriers, machine guns, and ammunition.⁵⁵

The capture of Pweto, on Lake Mweru and the Zambian border, was considered one of the most significant blows to the fragile ceasefire deal and caused an additional thousand DRC soldiers to flee into Zambia.⁵⁶ Negotiations were underway to repatriate these soldiers to Mfulira, a town away from the front near the DRC city of Lubumbashi.⁵⁷ On January 8, Bomba Zeko Ziki, an anxious Congolese platoon commander, declared, “We’re tired of Kabila’s war and we don’t even know why we’re fighting.” He complained not only about the pointlessness of the war but also about

the widespread human rights abuses within the ranks. Dressed in second-hand civilian clothes, the platoon commander said that he no longer had any interest in the war and that it was time for the conflict to be resolved politically.⁵⁸

MILITARY ACTIVITIES: THE EASTERN FRONT

Conflict also intensified in North and South Kivu after the signing of the Lusaka ceasefire. Along other fronts, government troops and their allies faced off against the rebels and their backers. In both North and South Kivu, most of the fighting was between pro-governmental militias and RCD rebels and their supporters. The violence in the Kivus was a clear violation of the Lusaka agreement. Kabila made his ties to the Mayi-Mayi militia explicit on September 7, 1999, when he appointed a known Mayi-Mayi militia leader, Lieutenant-General Sylvestre Lwecha, as the new armed forces chief of staff.⁵⁹ RCD-Goma was alarmed by this nomination, prompting Bizima Karaha to say that if Lwecha was not removed, "We will redouble our fight and remove him ourselves." Kabila further strengthened his connection to the militia by appointing another Mayi-Mayi leader, Shabani Sikatende, as the new commander of the DRC navy. The Congolese army also started a campaign on September 8, 1999, to encourage Mayi-Mayi fighters to leave the bush and undergo political and military training. FAC commander Bwino Mwenseku, the head of the Ninth Brigade, declared that his forces were "ready to work with the Mayi-Mayi."⁶⁰ In late September 1999, the rebels responded to this activity. A joint military operation by the Rwandan army and the RCD rebels was carried out against 4,000 Rwandan and Burundian militia in different parts of South Kivu, killing 200 of them.

Rebel authorities tried to respond to this provocation on the political as well as military front. On October 15, 1999, the RCD gave traditional leaders the task of facilitating a dialogue between the RCD and "armed groups" in South Kivu. The announcement was made at a conference held in early October in Bukavu. The conference was chaired by the leader of the Bifulero community, Ntare Simba, and attended by the RCD's territorial administration chief, Joseph Mudumbi. Similar actions and reactions between pro-government forces and the RCD rebels and their backers also took place in the North Kivu province. Yet these efforts fell by the wayside as Kabila renewed his efforts to restore government order in the eastern DRC. On November 2, 1999, Kabila informed the Rwandans that he was ready to launch an offensive against the rebels. He declared that his army was now ready to fulfill its mission to "liberate the east The aggressor may have won some battles, but not the war. Now the response of the FAC will be terrible but just."⁶¹ The Rwandan vice

president, Paul Kagame, affirmed on November 26 that the DRC forces were rearming: “Kabila has been purchasing military equipment and has reorganized his forces. Kabila received two shiploads of arms and equipments from China, India, and unknown countries, as well as purchasing six modified MIG-21 fighters.”⁶²

In the winter and spring of 2000, pro-government resistance against the rebels occurred not only through military attacks and terror tactics but through political channels as well. In Bukavu, pamphlets denouncing “invaders” and “strangers” had been circulating regularly. The RCD-Goma authorities warned the population on February 9, 2000, that incitement to tribal hatred and the circulation of information capable of inflaming the population to violence were legally punishable acts. The RCD authorities recognized the explosive potential of ethnic hatred, having heard of public meetings in which the expulsion of the Tutsi from rebel-held territories had been discussed.⁶³ On February 14, various civil organizations called for strikes in Bukavu, launching a civil disobedience campaign that lasted two weeks. The movement also spread to other cities such as Kisangani, Butembo, and Kindu.

The continued circulation of pamphlets calling for civil disobedience reflected the growing discontent in eastern DRC with the RCD and its backers.⁶⁴ The strikes were a serious blow to the movement’s popularity. In an attempt to restore order, rebel leader Jean-Pierre Ondekane traveled to Bukavu to explain the RCD aims among the population. RCD spokesman Kin Kiy Mulumba described the residents of Bukavu as being “intoxicated by Kabila’s media.” Mulumba accused South Kivu pressure groups of “stirring up social tension.” He added that “this is a major problem for us we must ensure security at all costs.”⁶⁵ A crackdown and many arrests ensued. Even the Banyamulenge group *Forces Républicaines Fédéralistes* (FRF) in Bukavu spoke out against the RCD. It called for the withdrawal of Rwandan forces from the DRC, accusing them of “systematic looting.” The group said that the presence of their supposed defenders was turning the local population against them. The FRF blamed elements in Bukavu civil society for “equating Banyamulenge Tutsi with foreigners” and claimed that this had caused “thousand of deaths since 1995.”⁶⁶ Some of these “elements” continued to spread hate messages against the Banyamulenge through a variety of means. According to Refugees International NGO, “150,000 Banyamulenge [were] at imminent risk of violent attack by Mayi-Mayi militia” at that time.

By mid-March 2000, the Mayi-Mayi’s destabilization campaign spread into North Kivu from Kalonge toward the Bunyakiri forest, forcing the suspension of humanitarian activities there.⁶⁷ On March 30, 2000, Mayi-Mayi encircled the Hauts Plateaux of Uvira and launched attacks on the Banyamulenge, killing many.⁶⁸ After this attack, 700 Banyamulenge families fled to Burundi, while 200 went to Bwagera in the Ruzizi plain.

In March and April, there was a growing sense that the pro-government militias of South Kivu were better armed and coordinated than in the past. Previously they tended to attack and withdraw, but now they fought to keep their territory and prevent the displaced from returning to their villages in the area.⁶⁹

RCD forces did not take the new Mayi-Mayi aggression passively; in retaliation they torched the village of Izege, near Walungu, on April 26, 2000, in an attempt to flush out Mayi-Mayi fighters who attacked an RCD camp at Mulume Munene.⁷⁰ In the Walungu area some 45 kilometers (about 28 miles) southwest of Bukavu, additional fighting between Rwandan forces and Mayi-Mayi was reported on May 25, 2000. The fighting began when the RPA moved against Mayi-Mayi positions in the Kabare area. The Mayi-Mayi offered stiff resistance at Burhale, leading to thirty-five deaths and sixty wounded.⁷¹ The South Kivu vice governor Benjamin Serukiza affirmed on June 7, 2000, that the RCD launched a third attack against the Mayi-Mayi in the mountains of Rugeje. It killed six civilians and twenty-five Mayi-Mayi fighters and captured twenty of them. Fighting had also erupted north of Bukavu in the Kalehe region, killing sixty civilians in the villages of Nyabibwe and Numbi.

By June, the civilian population of South Kivu was suffering immensely as a result of the conflict. Civil society organizations criticized the international community of not taking steps to prevent the terror tactics against civilians, especially by the pro-government militias in the areas around Bukavu, Kalehe, and Uvira.⁷² But the cries fell on deaf ears. On June 28, 2000, roughly 1,000 Interahamwe militia carried out a new wave of attacks in Kabare and surrounding villages, killing and raping many civilians and causing 10,000 people to flee to Bukavu. Rape, looting, destruction of property, abduction of citizens, and forced displacement ran rampant in the areas surrounding Bukavu.⁷³ Ethnic tension in the east inspired by Kabila and his allies was threatening to bring down the Lusaka accord and plunge Congo back into a full-scale war. In Uvira, the military authorities of the RCD-Goma held discussions with elders, departmental and district heads, and intellectuals on how to curtail tensions in Uvira, especially those provoked by inflammatory pamphlets distributed by local politicians. Participants in the meeting, held on August 4, 2000, were especially concerned about the fact that ethnic Tutsi-Banyamulenge families living in the area were increasingly coming under attack by the Mayi-Mayi forces. According to the RCD commander, Simba Hussein, "A rabid propaganda campaign was being spread to create insecurity in Uvira, and it was succeeding because of the lack of trust between the sons and daughters of Uvira."⁷⁴ In August, rebel authorities tried other measures to placate dissenters. The governor of South Kivu, Norbert Katintima, announced a new set of administrative measures aimed at decentralizing government power

to bring more authority to the local level. He declared that 60 percent of the provincial income would be used for developmental activities and 40 percent for the RCD.⁷⁵ Later in the fall, these administrative measures created rather than dissipated tensions in Uvira as a result of a local administrative team being replaced by the South Kivu provincial authorities.

The situation in Bukavu also proved highly unstable; on August 28, 2000, eight civilians were killed and fifty were wounded in a grenade attack. The Mayi-Mayi had tossed grenades into a crowd of 3,000 people attending an amusement fair organized by the local Bralima brewery in central Bukavu. Rebel commander Jean-Pierre Ondekane stated, "The grenade attack in Bukavu and the attacks of the Kauzi-Biega national park were carried out by 'adverse forces' on the payroll of Kabila's fascist regime, and who are spread all over the Ruzizi plain."⁷⁶ The militias' terror campaign continued through late summer and early fall. On September 12, 2000, they ambushed a truck carrying civilians to a local market on the Congo-Burundi border, killing fourteen occupants.⁷⁷ On September 15, the Mayi-Mayi attacked the RCD-RPA in the village of Nyanga in the Walikale district, killing ninety-three Rwandan soldiers and six white mercenaries.⁷⁸ The militias' destabilization strategy focused not only on attacking RCD-RPA positions but also on assaulting groups suspected of helping the rebels. Terroristic killings erupted once again along the main Uvira-Bukavu road on September 22, 2000. The government-allied guerrillas succeeded in spreading fear in the region, prompting people to flee to "safer" areas. Those wanting to travel from between Uvira and Bukavu had no other option but to cross into Burundi and use the road between the Burundian cities of Cibitoke and Bujumbura.⁷⁹ Also at this time, Mayi-Mayi forces recaptured Matere, near Shabunda, from the RCD, recovering a significant quantity of arms and ammunition.⁸⁰ In the Hauts Plateaux area of Uvira, three Banyamulenge villages came under attack by Mayi-Mayi and Burundian rebels on November 7, 2000. During the attack, nine people were killed and significant property was destroyed. Local organizations warned of the existence of "extremist" Mayi-Mayi groups cooperating with the Burundian militia and bent on exterminating the Tutsis in the eastern region.⁸¹

In Bukavu anti-Tutsi feeling was running high since the RCD-Goma refused to allow the popular archbishop Emmanuel Kataliko to return to his Bukavu archdiocese because he had encouraged his followers to resist rebel rule. The public sentiment in Bukavu was turning ugly: in one public demonstration, a dead dog was dragged behind a car with crowds shouting, "This is how you treat a Tutsi." On October 5, 2000, when it was announced that Archbishop Emmanuel Kataliko had died, hatred against the Tutsis reached a feverish pitch. Gunshots were heard

in several parts of Bukavu and groups of young people marched through the streets carrying crosses and chanting slogans.

In the last months of 2000, the Banyamulenge community in Bukavu expressed deep concern for its safety. A Munyamulenge claimed that the Tutsis were being targeted on suspicion of “having killed” Kataliko, forcing many to flee or go into hiding. This “massive resentment” toward the RCD was due to the fact that the populace accused the rebels of serving “foreign” (meaning Rwandan) interests. Well represented within the RCD, the minority Congolese-Tutsi were being held responsible for Kataliko’s death, attacks on civilians, and the presence of the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) in the DRC territory. The NGO African Rights described the Banyamulenge-Tutsi of South Kivu as “particularly isolated and their retaliatory stance has reinforced widespread negative feelings against them.”

Hoping to open the Uvira-Baraka road, which had been “impassable” for many months due to ambushes by the Mayi-Mayi, the RCD-RPA launched another offensive in the Makobola, Sima, and Mboko areas, around Uvira and Fizi. On December 8, 2000, it was reported that the RCD was “making progress” in flushing out the militia in these strongholds.⁸² After these offensives, the RCD declared on January 3, 2001, that security had been restored for the people of Uvira and Fizi districts. On December 14, 2000, the RCD-Goma decided to fight back politically against its unpopularity in the rebel-controlled east. The new RCD secretary general, Azeria Ruberwa, appointed at the end of October after Emile Ilunga’s resignation, declared that the RCD would initiate the payment of salary arrears to workers. The RCD was alarmed by a series of general strikes, which revealed the hostility of the population toward the movement. Arbitrary arrests, illegal detentions, forced deportations, and acts of intimidation used in retaliation to Mayi-Mayi attacks fed the unpopularity of the RCD.⁸³ Its leaders hoped to turn the situation around with its concessions.

In many ways, the situation in North Kivu was even more complex than in South Kivu due to the greater number of combatants. In the late summer of 2000, the Mayi-Mayi made a major push into North Kivu. On September 12, a Mayi-Mayi group of 150 men occupied the airport at Butembo. Later that fall, Mayi-Mayi attacks on the northern town of Beni claimed more than sixty lives, including those of several Ugandan army officers. But the Mayi-Mayi were not the only militia group opposing the RCD-ML and its Ugandan backers in North Kivu. Indeed, Interahmwe groups that had joined other pro-Kabila forces had been launching raids and terrorizing the civilian population from the beginning of the post-Lusaka conflict.⁸⁴ In early September 2000, the Interahamwe had killed four civilians while attacking the Kibumba area outside Goma, as well as three environmental researchers in the nearby national park.⁸⁵

Armed groups were not the only entities resisting the RCD-ML and Ugandan army occupation of North Kivu. In early 2000, civil society groups organized strikes in Goma by shutting down businesses, schools, and the central market for two weeks.⁸⁶ The RCD-ML blamed the strikes in both Goma and Bukavu on Kabila's "agents." According to rebel leader Bizima Karaha, civil disobedience was one of Kabila's tactics to prolong the war: "He first armed the Interahamwe and Mayi-Mayi to fight us and failed. Now he is trying to infiltrate the population and cause civil disobedience in areas under our control." According to various reports, the civil disobedience movement spread to Butembo, Kisangani, and Kindu.⁸⁷

From the beginning of the fighting after the signing of the ceasefire agreement, RCD-Goma and its backers reacted to quell the insurgency against it in North Kivu. On September 29, 1999, Goma residents spoke of a large number of Rwandan troops crossing over the border into North Kivu. The RPA sought to use these forces to counteract the increasing number of Interahamwe in the area.

Yet attacks on rebel sympathizers continued. In the Rutshuru, the violence led Rwandan forces to forcibly relocate residents into camps on March 1, 2000. People were being removed from their villages in the Tongo, Kibirizi, and Bambu areas, angering civilians in the region.⁸⁸ To counter this popular antipathy rising across North Kivu, the RCD-Goma authorities decided to try to galvanize mass support in the parts of the province under their jurisdiction. On April 20, 2000, 6,000 people attended an RCD mobilization rally in the town of Kitchanga.⁸⁹ Despite this rhetoric, the RCD continued to engage in campaigns in North Kivu that alienated civilians. In the summer of 2000, Rwandan-backed rebels launched against "adverse forces" a "clean-up operation," which multiplied human rights abuses in the Goma region and contributed to widespread resentment.⁹⁰ This campaign fed attacks on rebel forces and their foreign allies. In the face of this rising turmoil, Ugandan and Rwandan forces joined together in the contested North Kivu town of Kanyabayonga against the local Mayi-Mayi on July 24, 2000. The RPA commander stated, "Cooperation was needed in the no-man's land of Kanyabayonga. It is in the interest of both countries to work together."⁹¹

In late 2000, help for the RCD's struggle against the militias came from an unexpected source: the local Batembo people of North Kivu. On November 29, 2000, Batembo leaders expressed their unhappiness with the Mayi-Mayi there. They gave the leader of the Mayi-Mayi militia, "General" Padiri, an ultimatum: lay down arms within thirty days or "face the consequences," stating, "We will take matters into our own hands and fight him if necessary." The ultimatum was issued through the traditional head of the Batembo tribe, Katola Ndalemwa, who made the announcement at Bunyakiri, north of Bukavu. Ndalemwa and the

traditional chiefs in his area had for some time been trying to mediate with Padiri, who is also Batembo. Ndalemwa said, "He no longer has a just cause to fight for, but has instead been collaborating with the Rwandan Interahamwe." The Batembo chief claimed that 2,000 Batembo people had been killed by the Mayi-Mayi and Interahamwe. The chief said, "We are tired of the negotiations. We have been carrying on negotiations with him that have led nowhere."⁹² General Padiri did not respect the thirty-day window to give up his weapons, and so Batembo resistance against the Mayi-Mayi began. By the end of 2000, the position of the RCD seemed to be strengthening in both North and South Kivu.

FIGHTING IN KISANGANI: A WAR WITHIN A WAR

Probably the most flagrant violation of the Lusaka agreement came with the fighting between Ugandan and Rwandan forces in the Province Orientale's capital city of Kisangani. The signs of conflict between these allies began to appear on July 23, 1999, when the RCD leader Emile Ilunga announced that the rebel movement wanted James Kazini, the chief of staff of the Uganda Peoples Defence Force (UPDF), to leave Kisangani. Kazini was asked to leave since he supported Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, the leader of a competing RCD faction.

The compromise formula that allowed the Lusaka agreement to be signed by the fifty founding members of the RCD did not ease the factional tensions, nor did it ease those between Rwandan and Ugandan forces in Kisangani. On August 4, 1999, there were reports that the political situation had become very volatile in Kisangani despite the fact that the overall security situation in the Province Orientale had improved. Yet the potential for volatility existed due to the presence of four different rebel groups with conflicting interests in the province: Wamba's RCD-Kisangani, Ilunga's RCD-Goma, Bemba's Ugandan-backed MLC, and the newly formed *Mouvement pour la Sécurité, la Paix, et le Développement* (MSPD) led by Willy Mishiki, a former aide to Wamba. Of all of these groups, Wamba's was the most popular in Kisangani.⁹³ His popularity rose when he proposed to step up negotiations with Kabila and began to denounce the Tutsi domination of the rebellion. Reported harassment of locals by Rwandan-backed rebels has also boosted the popularity of Wamba and his Ugandan backers. At the same time, the province was becoming increasingly isolated. River traffic from Kinshasa had stopped; it had become impossible to drive from Goma and supplies brought in by plane from Uganda were too costly for most people.

On August 6, 1999, fighting exploded in Kisangani between the RCD-Goma and RCD-Kisangani factions, terrifying the civilian population. The fierce fighting, which began on Saturday and lasted until Sunday afternoon, killed one soldier and wounded five. In addition, six

civilians were killed by stray bullets. The fighting was an apparent attempt by Rwandan-backed rebels to prevent a Zambian delegation from visiting the town since the delegation would meet with RCD-Kisangani leaders and provide them with support. Hours before the delegation was due to land at the Kisangani airport, the forces of Rwandan-backed RCD-Goma opened fire on Wamba's forces and their Ugandan allies near the airport. In town, residents were forced inside their homes by Ilunga's rebels, who traded gunfire with Wamba's soldiers and warned people not to attend a rally that Wamba had planned to coincide with the Zambian visit.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, thousands of Kisangani residents braved these intimidation tactics and poured onto the streets late on Saturday, screaming and cheering for Wamba and his forces who drove through town on pickup trucks.

On August 9, 1999, the chief military RCD-Goma commander Jean-Pierre Ondekane said that Ugandan actions in Kisangani demonstrated "the will of the Ugandan army to artificially create a political space for Wamba. . . . This was a serious provocation against the RCD." Ondekane added that the RCD-Goma had responded to several "provocations" by Kampala, such as the disarming of Wamba's troops in Beni, Butembo, and Bunia. The RCD-Goma rejected Uganda's attempt to create the new province of Kibali-Ituri within the Province Orientale and warned that RCD forces "are now ready to respond to any new provocation."⁹⁵ Nonetheless, the UPDF's James Kazini and the RPA's Patrick Nyanvumba, both commanders of their respective forces in Kisangani, met in an effort to restore calm, and they appeared to have ordered their groups to stop fighting. Kazini, however, provocatively told Radio Liberty that he was still in charge of the town. On August 10, 1999, Ugandan and Rwandan troops and their rebel proxies formally split Kisangani in two opposing sectors.⁹⁶ In addition, the RCD Seventh Brigade announced that reinforcements had arrived from Goma, creating even greater tension.

Wamba supporters feared an attack from Ilunga's troops and his Rwandan backers. The Hotel Wagenia, Wamba's headquarters, was closely guarded by Ugandan forces, as were the Congo Palace and Palm Beach Hotel. They also set up machine guns and mortars at various points and dug foxholes outside the offices of Bemba's MLC. Ugandan soldiers surrounded other public buildings, including the jail and two banks. They were also in control of the main airport, while the second airport, Simi-Simi, was in Rwandan hands. On August 9, 1999, the South African foreign minister, Nkosanzana Zuma, visited Kisangani accompanied by the Zambian presidential affairs minister, Eric Silwamba.

The diplomatic mission led by Zuma did nothing to improve the situation on the ground. On Sunday, August 15, 1999, Ugandan and Rwandan troops again engaged in a firefight for the control of the international airport at Kisangani.⁹⁷ According to Rwandan military

officials, this clash was prompted by Ugandan troops' attempt to dislodge Rwandan soldiers and their RCD-Goma allies from the airport. According to Wamba, the Rwandans had trucked in over 4,000 troops from the border town of Goma before the fighting. They were pitched against 1,500 of RCD-Kisangani rebels and an unspecified number of Ugandan soldiers. The following day, fighting spread into the residential streets of Kisangani and fires burned uncontrolled across the city.⁹⁸

On August 16, the Rwandan minister in the office of the president, Patrick Mazimhaka, presented the Rwandan version of events. "Kisangani was a town that was run by the RCD and controlled by the Congolese rebels. But last week Ugandans went and shot them out of their positions to install Wamba there and that has created an extremely tense atmosphere."⁹⁹ The Rwandan news agency reported that the fighting started when 400 Ugandan soldiers were flown to Kisangani and ordered to encircle Rwandan positions at the airport ten and half miles (seventeen kilometers) from the city. RCD-Goma claimed that Rwandan soldiers fired gunshots at a Ugandan army convoy to provoke a confrontation.¹⁰⁰ Whatever triggered the fighting, the violence continued. Rwandan troops pressed toward the hotel in which Wamba was staying in what Wamba believed was an attempt to capture him. As the battle continued, Ugandan troops continued to land at the airport. On Tuesday, August 17, Rwandan and Ugandan troops clashed again, and the Ugandans launched an offensive to try to regain lost ground. During the fighting, many of the 1 million people of Kisangani and its immediate environs were cowering in their homes to escape the fighting, and some fifty people died. Also on August 17, diplomatic attempts to end the situation in Kisangani commenced, when the Rwandan defense minister, Paul Kagame, and the Ugandan president, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, held talks in Kampala.

On Wednesday, August 18, fighting between Rwandan and Ugandan troops died down in Kisangani after Museveni and Kagame agreed to a ceasefire to take immediate effect. The two leaders also agreed on steps toward the implementation of the ceasefire and a cessation of the "verbal battles in the media by officials of either country." Despite this negotiated peace, the control of Kisangani had shifted from the Ugandan to the Rwandan army despite ceasefire agreement that both sides should return to the positions held before the outbreak.¹⁰¹

On a superficial level, the reasons behind the Rwandan and Ugandan presences in the DRC differ. Rwandans claimed they were there to secure their own border against Hutu forces, while Ugandans seemed to do little to hide the fact they were there to exploit resources for profit and to divide the movement opposed to Kabila. There were reports that senior Ugandan officers were selling gold, diamond, and coffee concessions in areas controlled by their forces and rebel allies. Museveni put a more altruistic gloss on Ugandan actions in Kisangani: the troops were

there to protect Wamba and to guarantee the verification mission of the Zambian and South Africa ministers.¹⁰² Understanding the ethnic tensions within both Rwanda and Uganda themselves is critical in comprehending the conflict in Kisangani. For example, domestic anti-Tutsi pressure pressed Museveni to discard the Rwandans within Uganda who helped him attain power, thus influencing his policy for the DRC.¹⁰³ Although Rwandan authorities positioned their moves in Kisangani as defensive, many observers perceived them as part of an aggressive attempt to expand Rwandan influence over the region. Overall, almost all observers could agree that all parties—not only the warring groups and their backers, but also those mediating to halt the war—were using the Kisangani conflict as a theater for a multilevel power game.

On August 21, 1999, the Rwandan president, Paul Kagame, went to Uganda for further talks with Museveni, meeting with his counterpart at the Rwakitura Ranch in Mbarara in Western Uganda.¹⁰⁴ Wamba was also in Uganda, meeting with the military officials in Kampala, before departing for Lusaka. The UN secretary general expressed his concern about the clashes in Kisangani and said that they were complicating efforts to solve the DRC conflict. He urged Rwanda and Uganda to sign the ceasefire agreement in Lusaka.¹⁰⁵ By August 23, 1999, few local people in Kisangani appeared to support either of the two factions fighting street to street in Kisangani. Most of the battle took place in the heart of the city—around the three hotels, local banks, and the prison—virtually shutting down all normal activity. Jean Bwendo, a fifty-two-year-old resident said, “Enough with this war imported from outside, enough of rebellions: the Congolese people need peace. We don’t care about them [the rebels]; all we need is to be left alone.”¹⁰⁶

By September 6, 1999, the diplomatic efforts led to some progress: Ugandan troops began withdrawing from Kisangani, exiting through the northeast toward Bafwasende.¹⁰⁷ At the same time, about 1,000 Rwandan soldiers also left town and headed southeast.¹⁰⁸

Because of the withdrawal of the troops from Kisangani, tensions between the Ugandan and Rwandans troops spread east of the city into North Kivu around Rutshuru, Lubero, and Kanyabayonga. Two Ugandan and RCD-Kisangani battalions were deployed in those areas.¹⁰⁹ On October 11, RCD-Goma vowed to recapture territory controlled by the RCD-Kisangani group in North Kivu. The Goma group was determined to recover the northern part of North Kivu and the Ituri district in the Province Orientale, where the new provinces had been declared. RCD-Goma leader Ilunga stated, “Our movement can not accept the ‘Somalization’ of the country.”

The UN Security Council strongly condemned the renewed fighting in Kisangani and called for all parties to adhere to a demilitarization plan.¹¹⁰ On June 7, Kofi Annan reiterated his plea to the combatants to

embrace an immediate ceasefire and withdraw their forces.¹¹¹ The UN secretary general contacted Museveni and Kagame on June 8, expressing indignation and shock at the continued fighting that had resulted in the deaths of an estimated 100 civilians and the wounding of more than 1,000: "There can be no justification of such reckless victimization of the civilian population, who are trapped in a conflict not of their own making." U.S. special envoy Richard Holbrooke did the same, pressuring the two sides to end the fighting in Kisangani.¹¹² The same day, OAU secretary general, Salim Ahmed Salim, appealed to both sides to "contribute to a peaceful resolution" of the DRC crisis.¹¹³ The EU special envoy to the Great Lakes, Aldo Ajello, also condemned the resumption of fighting: "What is happening is unacceptable since it is like a war inside another war."¹¹⁴

By mid-June, the idea of imposing sanctions against Rwanda and Uganda if they failed to withdraw from Kisangani was circulating widely in the international arena. Kofi Annan stated that Rwanda and Uganda should be held accountable for the loss of life and property in Kisangani. Representatives of the two countries reacted to Annan's statement by saying that if the UN adopted sanctions, the entire Lusaka agreement would collapse. Nonetheless, Uganda declared a unilateral ceasefire on June 8. Uganda's national political commissioner James Wapakabulo went so far as to declare, "To ensure that the ceasefire holds, the UDFP is prepared to ignore sporadic shelling of its positions, but only if such shellings do not amount to preparation for ground attacks."¹¹⁵ On June 11, Ugandan forces began withdrawing from Kisangani. According to Wapakabulo, "The UDFP command reviewed the situation and took decision to withdraw from the positions it held on June 5 back to Kapalata," five miles outside of the city, in order to minimize civilian casualties and property damage. Uganda's withdrawal was in part due to its leaders' perception of the nation's international standing as being so damaged by the Kisangani conflict that it would suffer long-term repercussions.¹¹⁶ Kigali had come to a similar realization and announced on June 11 that Rwandan forces would immediately withdraw from Kisangani also to avoid civilian casualties.¹¹⁷ But the RCD-Goma announced that its forces would stay in Kisangani after the demilitarization of the town. According to Hugo Ilondo, "Kisangani was liberated in September 1998 by RCD soldiers, supported by Rwanda. . . . It is absurd that our movement composed of Congolese should leave Kisangani. To go where?"

The Rwandans did not agree with their rebel allies and insisted that RCD-Goma forces should withdraw like the other parties in the conflict. A Rwandan official said, "They would not gain anything by staying in the town. It is not necessary to cause complication to the demilitarization process."¹¹⁸ The Rwandan commandant said, "Our preoccupation is to withdraw from Kisangani. If the Ugandans want the city, they can have

it.”¹¹⁹ On June 14, 2000, the Rwandans joined the Ugandans in pulling their troops out of Kisangani. Six days later the bulk of Ugandan and Rwandan forces appeared to have left the city.¹²⁰ But by June 20, 2000, a disturbing counter-development became evident: as the Ugandan and Rwandan troops withdrew, observers noted an increased presence of RCD-Goma and MLC rebel forces in Kisangani. RCD-Goma reiterated that it would not leave Kisangani until the MONUC was strong enough to defend the city. Kisangani was a highly strategic location with two airports and a port, thus making the rebel groups reluctant to leave it wide open. The RCD-Goma foreign minister, Adolphe Onusumba, stated, “We cannot risk leaving it to people who cannot defend it. Suppose Kabila comes in and take over the place. That means the fighting will happen all over again.”¹²¹

Yet with the approach of summer, a sense of normalcy began to return to Kisangani. Verbal skirmishes replaced military ones. The MLC accused the RCD of beating up its supporters in Kisangani and warned that it would deploy troops in response. The RCD denied the accusation and accused Bemba of using it as an excuse to start trouble in Kisangani. Despite these antagonisms, the ravaged city of Kisangani was quiet and the ceasefire seemed to have been holding. With the conflict over, the Red Cross on July 12 announced the casualty figures from the conflict: 760 people were killed in June in Kisangani, with 619 civilians and 141 soldiers. In addition, 1,700 civilians were wounded.¹²²

DYNAMICS WITHIN THE REBEL GROUPS

The fighting in Kisangani was a clear indication of deteriorating relations between rebel groups and their backers. There was also continuing fragmentation within rebel factions themselves characterized by defections and the switching of alliances. Accusations of corruption within the RCD-Goma surfaced on October 14, 1999. Allegations arose that Emile Ilunga had embezzled funds, and a general audit was ordered by the RCD Politburo. This decision was made because “large sums of money” received by Ilunga, including \$500,000 from the Gabonese president, Omar Bongo, and \$1.5 million from a South African bank, had never been put into an RCD account.¹²³ On October 22, 1999, there were reports of an emerging split within the RCD-Goma: one group supported Ilunga and military commander Jean-Pierre Ondekane, and another had coalesced around security chief Bizima Karaha and Joseph Mudumbi, the head of the territorial department.¹²⁴ An administrative reshuffling took place on October 26, 1999 in an attempt to appease the factions. The RCD-Goma reduced its departments from twenty-four to sixteen. Emile Ilunga remained RCD president, Jean-Pierre Ondekane became first vice president, and Moise Nyarugabo became second vice

president.¹²⁵ But the leadership crisis proved far too deep to be solved by an administrative reshuffling.

Reports on November 8, 1999 indicated that the RCD sought Uganda's backing "amidst dwindling support for Rwanda." According to several sources, the faction of Vice President Moise Nyarugabo and Chief of Intelligence Bizima Karaha made a surprise visit to Kampala following days of "intense fighting" among members of the RCD general assembly.¹²⁶ On February 28, 2000, this turmoil resulted in the defection of a senior official, Roger Lumbala, who declared, "Some people joined the revolution thinking it would take weeks and they would get positions." Lumbala, who was being investigated for gross misconduct and was going to be arrested, fled to Kampala on February 14, 2000. Other leaders defected to rival movements such as the RCD-ML and the MLC.¹²⁷ Even the former RCD leader Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma announced his return to Kinshasa to help organize the upcoming Inter-Congolese Dialogue. Wamba described Ngoma's announcement as politically curious since he had been imprisoned and tortured by Kabila.¹²⁸ At the same time, Lembert Mende, the head of the RCD's information and political bureau, was suspended by the RCD. Nyarugabo said that the action was disciplinary and strictly internal to the RCD-Goma. On April 14, 2000, José Endudo, the former finance minister of the RCD-Goma, was arrested. He was accused of stealing funds from the movement, sending planes belonging to the movement to Kabila, and, worst of all, secretly meeting with Kabila's agents. Karaha said, "He has also been circulating tracts in Goma calling on the RCD military wing to usurp power, which is treasonous."

In order to handle the ongoing leadership crisis, Adolphe Onusumba was appointed the new president of the RCD-Goma on October 30, 2000. He was the former director of the RCD Foreign Affairs Department. Instead of having two vice presidents, Onusumba would now be assisted solely by Azarias Ruberwa, who would hold the newly created position of general secretary, the chief duty being to coordinate the executive body. Jean-Pierre Ondekane and Moise Nyarugabo were demoted to head of Military Activity Department and head of the Justice Department respectively. Regional analysts believed that the Rwandan government was behind these changes. Having consolidated his power by the end of October, Onusumba became the RCD's third leader after Wamba and Ilunga.¹²⁹ On November 3, 2000, Ilunga officially resigned as president of the RCD-Goma. He admitted that his executive team had failed in its work, recognized the mistakes of his leadership, but pledged to remain a member of the revolution. His two vice presidents, Ondekane and Nyarugabo, also resigned.¹³⁰

While the problems of the RCD-Goma seemed severe, those of the RCD-Kisangani were even worse. Back in July 1999, the majority of its officials resigned to form a new movement under Willy Mishiki, the

group's former spokesman. One Wamba loyalist, Jacques Depelchin, said, "A large number of people who joined the rebel movement at the beginning did so just to resolve their own problems. Mishiki is an example of this. He had left the group simply because his own personal ambitions have not been satisfied." Depelchin added that Wamba's group still had widespread popular support and had an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 soldiers in its ranks. Moïse Nyarugabo of the RCD-Goma explained that the defections from the RCD-Kisangani were due to Wamba's supporters "realizing they had made a mistake. . . . They would be welcomed back to the mainstream RCD." Nyarugabo added that the so-called declaration of an autonomous province in Ituri district within the Province Orientale was "an attempt by Wamba at secessionism, which we totally reject. We reject the balkanisation of Congo. Wamba is utilizing every possible means to find a small space for himself."¹³¹ In a written response to these accusations, Wamba stated that the war was fundamentally political, "and to conduct it as if the people do not count" was a mistake. Wamba tried to prevent the fragmentation of his movement by presenting a new political program on August 7, 2000. The program contained fifteen points: (1) democratizing the state; (2) promoting a durable peace and national cultures; (3) reconstructing society and the state; (4) revamping the economy; (5) reorganizing the armed forces, (6) building the health department, (7) restructuring the justice department; (8) setting up a competent and transparent administration; (9) creating an environment favorable to development benefiting all social classes; (10) protecting the population against physical, psychological, and food crises; (11) denouncing hateful and vengeful mentalities; (12) creating a "house of culture" for the promotion of the political, physical, and intellectual healing of the country; (13) conducting a national funeral for Mobutu Sese Seko; (14) establishing an independent structure to fight corruption and abuse of power; and (15) making military service for one year at the end of college education mandatory.¹³²

But following the fighting in Kisangani, Wamba lost some momentum when he moved the RCD headquarters to Bunia for "security reasons." A Wamba official, Mbusa Nyamwisi, vowed that the faction would return to Kisangani once the situation improved.¹³³ Wamba also renamed his group as the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-Mouvement de Libération* (RCD-ML) and established a transitional "government" in Bunia. Wamba became not only president of the RCD-ML but also the head of the Defense Department. The new administration, which was established on October 1, had two vice presidents, a prime minister, a deputy prime minister, eight ministers, and nine deputy ministers. Key appointees included Mbusa Nyamwisi as prime minister, Pashi Claver as foreign minister, and Jacques Depelchin as the local administration minister.¹³⁴

Lotsove's defection to Mishiki's group was just a drop in the deluge of problems that the RCD-ML would face in the coming months. On April 13, 2000, Wamba declared that he had been ousted by his own officials, mainly Minister of Finance Mbogemu Atenyi Tabasima and Prime Minister Mbusa Nyamwisi, while Wamba was on a trip to Kampala. Tensions ran high within the leadership of the RCD-ML, in part due to the handling of the ethnic conflict between Hema and Lendu peoples. Tibasima, a Hema, wanted Wamba to condemn the Lendu "for committing genocide" against his people, but Wamba refused since there had been killings by both parties to the conflict. Nyamwisi, an ethnic Nande, realized that Wamba, from the faraway province of Bas-Congo, was not popular among the Nande and thus saw the opportunity to push Wamba aside by forming a Nande-Hema alliance.¹³⁵ Wamba explained the coup attempt as a preemptive move to stop proposed changes in the top ranks of the movement, which he said had become inevitable due to inefficiencies.

To resolve the conflict, Museveni summoned the RCD-ML leadership to discuss its divisions on April 14, 2000. Museveni met with Wamba and other RCD-ML officials in Kampala. After the meeting, the factions promised to iron out their differences.¹³⁶ Despite Museveni's efforts, wrangling over leadership continued, and thus Museveni sent a senior Ugandan official, James Wapakhabulo, to Bunia to mediate between the two sides within the RCD-ML. He was accompanied by two other Ugandan officials: Lieutenant-Colonel Noble Mayombo, the deputy chief of military intelligence; and Colonel Kahinda Otafiire, the presidential adviser on the Congo. Wapakhabulo said, "These people assured our president that their differences were over, but problems keep coming up. Definitely something is wrong and we need to be watching the situation."¹³⁷ According to one observer, "The problem is that rival camps within the RCD-ML have backing from different camps in the Ugandan security system, which makes it difficult to sort out their problems. The Ugandan leadership has to talk with one voice."¹³⁸

Out of this struggle emerged yet another new movement, compounding the uncertainty in the already volatile region. It was comprised of Wahema militiamen and some Banyamulenge fighters who had joined the RCD-ML, forming what was initially known as the Usalama militia. In July, this new group began to clash with the Ugandan army and RCD-ML troops. Mbusa Nyamwisi and Atenyi Tabasima had guided this militia into Bunia to attempt to force Wamba out, which prompted the UPDF to intervene to protect the RCD-ML leader. By August 3, 500 of Nyamwisi's militia had surrendered to UPDF and the situation in Bunia had calmed down.¹³⁹ The new splinter faction had climbed down militarily, but it nonetheless still sought to gain political recognition. It announced its name as Leopard Mobile, and one of its leaders,

Ykakuheire Akiki, headed to Kampala to hold talks with Museveni, who had recently increased troop levels in Bunia to aid the RCD-ML. Akiki, heading this delegation, said, "Leopard Mobile is composed of our children who have decided not to work with Wamba because of his poor administration." He also accused Wamba of having "convinced the Ugandan authorities that the rebels of the new group were undergoing training to support the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), who are fighting the Ugandan government."¹⁴⁰

On September 4, 2000, another blow fell on Wamba. A mutiny of thirty soldiers allied with the suspended RCD-ML premier Mbusa Nyamwisi broke out. They were all from the Nande ethnic group and reportedly had taken refuge in a UN compound in Bunia after the recent fighting. They took control of a church-owned radio station and demanded that Wamba quit as leader of the RCD-ML. Holding the station for one hour, they broadcast reports that Wamba had been toppled. Once again, the UPDF intervened in Wamba's favor and the mutiny was crushed. The leader of the revolt, a Nyamwisi bodyguard known as Kitenge, was captured and flown with others mutineers to Kampala by the UPDF chief of military intelligence, Colonel Henry Tumukunde.¹⁴¹

Ugandan forces stationed in Bunia had thus far shown loyalty to Wamba, but in October 2000 they apparently decided to turn against him. The UPDF took full control of the Bunia airport and attempted to overthrow a commander of the Wamba faction. Colette Ramm, Wamba's cabinet director, announced that Ugandan troops were now backing Wamba's rivals within the RCD-ML. Ramm noted that this change was instituted by Ugandan military officers "who were protecting their own interests in the DRC." Wamba did not yet perceive his situation as desperate since Museveni seemed to still back him. Members of the RCD-ML had just spent fifteen days in Uganda to discuss the internal leadership, with the final resolution stating that Nyamwisi and Tibasima would be appointed as Wamba's first and second vice presidents. The executive committee would also look into the fundamental texts of the movement's constitution and write a new political program, constitution, and set of internal regulations.¹⁴²

As the RCD-ML seemed to implode in Bunia in the fall of 2000, several attempts to unite all of the forces struggling to oust Kabila were initiated. On November 30, 1999, reconciliation talks between the RCD-Goma, the RCD-ML, and the MLC took place. Yet the leader of the MLC, Jean-Pierre Bemba, said that the meeting would be premature until the individual issues that divided the RCD groups in Kisangani, Butembo, and Beni were resolved.¹⁴³ On December 16, 1999, the idea of a substantive reconciliation meeting between all the rebel factions at last came to fruition when it was announced that the

RCD-ML, the RCD-Goma, and the MLC would meet in Uganda in the town of Kabale. Kin Kiey Mulumba said, “We are hoping to form a common front, one single organization that would be united both politically and militarily.” At this point Bemba favored the meeting with its new emphasis on improving relations between the factions. The other main rebel leaders also attended the meeting, during which the three rebel movements devised a “coordination formula” rather than agreeing to merge. According to Bemba, a merger might come once mutual trust is reestablished, but ultimately it appeared that each wished to “retain their own individual identity.”¹⁴⁴

THE LENDU VERSUS HEMA CONFLICT: ANOTHER WAR WITHIN A WAR

The crisis of leadership within the RCD-ML greatly destabilized conditions in the Province Orientale, but it was not the only factor. During the same period, the conflict between Hema and Lendu peoples also wrought havoc in the region.¹⁴⁵ On September 14, 1999, hundreds of people were killed and many buildings were torched as a result of a tribal feud in the remote area of Djugu. Friction between pastoralists Hema and agriculturalist Lendu ethnic groups in the Djugu area of Ituri had begun in mid-June, essentially over longstanding local land disputes. Some of the fighting reached the village of Angela, causing the death of 370 Hema pastoralists at the hands of Lendu farmers, according to an RCD-ML official. The same official reported that the violence had started after members of the Hema group reportedly tried to extend their land holdings into Lendu property, allegedly making their claim with title documents falsified in collaboration with local authorities.

The Ugandan-backed attempt to dismantle the Province Orientale and create a new entity, the Kibali Ituri province, had also created a festering resentment before the killings erupted. Ugandan military commander James Kazini appointed Adele Lotsove, a Hema, as the newly created province’s governor, thus causing great discontent among other tribes, notably the Nande, Ngeti, and Lendu. “Since the nomination of that woman as governor, the region is in total turmoil for the other tribes refused to acknowledge her and her new province.” On December 7, 1999, a report of the DRC human rights group ASADHO (*Association Africaine de Défense des Droits de l’Homme*) claimed that the inter-ethnic conflict in the northeast Ituri district between the Lendu and Hema people was due in part to a lack of confidence in the state’s ability to provide protection. ASADHO also reported that the situation was aggravated by the “partisan attitude” of Ugandan troops toward the Hema people. Conflict between Hema and Lendu has occurred several times in the recent past, including in 1972, 1985, and 1996. The

country's 1973 land law was to blame for much of the ethnic frictions; it stated that people could purchase already inhabited property and that after two years competing claims to the land cannot be contested in court. This practice resulted in families being driven off their fields and out of their homes.

The presence of various Congolese and foreign armed groups, the easy availability of weapons, the war-ravaged economy, and the rise in "ethnic ideology" in the Ituri area provided fodder for a ferocious escalation of the conflict. One humanitarian analyst noted, "It is a very old dispute, but this conflict is linked to the current situation in the region. It started as a land issue, but it has now become a conflict over power and money." In the fall of 1999, reports indicated that Ugandan soldiers had fought during the conflict on the side of the Hema in exchange for cash payments. An Ugandan military official denied that that was the case: "We are not in the that place to support either of those groups. We are there for our security." Wamba confirmed the report and said a renegade Uganda commander had been dismissed for hiring out soldiers to Hema leaders. However, Wamba said that the Lendu have been "supported by 'infiltrators' loyal to Kabila." Though casualty figures were difficult to confirm, 5,000 to 7,000 people were estimated to have been killed in Djugu. According to *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF), there were "untold numbers that have died of illnesses and epidemics associated with living under marginal socio-economic circumstances or in the bush without adequate access to drinking water or medical care."¹⁴⁶ Vast expanses of landscape were empty, dotted with burned villages and abandoned fields containing the sparse remnants of the summer crops.

In October 1999, a delegation of rebels and officials from Uganda, which nominally controlled the area, traveled to Ituri in an attempt to try to restore peace. A Ugandan official said, "We talked to some of the Balendu who had been imprisoned because of the fighting and we have now released them and sent them back to their people to try and persuade them to put down the guns and bring peace to the area." He continued, "I have heard that this has made some difference. But we really need a month-long program of this sort to have any longterm results."¹⁴⁷ A November 5, 1999 report stated that the conflict between the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups had subsided in Djugu. In addition to Uganda's effort to bring about peace, the RCD-ML too engaged in reconciliation talks. According to the rural network Radio Candip, the governor of the newly declared "autonomous province" of Kibali-Ituri addressed a new commission of about 450 delegates in Bunia.¹⁴⁸ Many observers approached this RCD-ML effort with skepticism because they doubted whether the local political will to reach a sustainable solution existed. As one commentator noted, "Even if temporary arrangements

have stopped the killings for now, the conflict has not been solved and without true reconciliation between the two camps, it will start up again for sure.”¹⁴⁹

Regional observers feared that the volatile military and political situation resulting from the Hema-Lendu clashes could create new obstacles to the implementation of the Lusaka peace plan. One analyst saw the fighting as potentially contagious, fearing that it could create “conflict between other ethnic groups in the area.”¹⁵⁰ After mediation efforts had brought about a temporary lull in November, the Lendu-Hema fighting erupted again on December 21, 1999, with the most intense fighting around Djugu. The fierceness of this violence displaced 20,000 to 30,000 people toward nearby towns, particularly Bunia. Arms had been pouring into the area from Rwanda and Uganda. Aid workers said that initially the poor Lendu used traditional weapons such as bows and arrows, spears, and machetes, while many of the Hema possessed modern firearms. In early January, an MSF unit based in Bunia struggled to provide medical care to all comers, but since it was based in a predominantly Hema area, it and other humanitarian NGOs in Bunia were accused of being biased. The MSF thus planned to dispatch another team to be stationed in Rethy in Mahagi, a predominantly Lendu area. MSF staff member encountered many displaced persons with traumatic experiences, including scores of adults and children with machete wounds.¹⁵¹ The long-running conflict between pastoralist Hema and Lendu farmers had taken on many aspects of the conflict between the Tutsi minority and the Hutu majority in neighboring Rwanda. The Lendu were more numerous in the area, but the Hema owned most of the land, with some Hema having been left big concessions by the former Belgian colonizers, including coffee plantations and even gold mines in a few places. The seventeen-month-old DRC civil war greatly aggravated tensions since the Hema attained more influence under the new rebel administration and used it to claim more land.

On February 4, 2000, both Rwanda and Uganda vowed to try to stop the killings in the Ituri district. The Rwandan minister Patrick Mazimhaka said, “We are investigating to determine whether there has been a serious breach of international humanitarian law. . . . We hope local leaders will address the underlying causes of the conflict, like the use of land.” Museveni also noted that Ugandans had intervened at the request of local authorities.¹⁵² While land rights unquestionably lay at the heart of the bloodshed between the Lendu and Hema people, Hema leaders asserted that the conflict was driven by Lendu ambitions of supremacy in the area. They also expressed their belief that exterior forces, such as Ugandan troops and even politicians in Kinshasa, had had a hand in the crisis. According to figures released by Hema leaders in Bunia, 8,608 people were killed in Lendu attacks on twenty villages.

Hema spokesman Professor Karimagi Pilo told reporters, “It is a political rebellion,” and that the conflict had been planned and conceived by the Organization for the Liberation of the Oppressed of Ituri (LORI), a Lendu group that he claimed had senior leaders based in Kinshasa. He continued, “It is wrong to say that in Djugu the Lendu are fighting the Hema because of land. . . . All tribes of Djugu have been attacked by the Lendu. . . . They have created a human, social, and economic catastrophe that they cannot stop.”¹⁵³

By the time of Laurent-Désiré Kabila’s death on January 16, 2001, a resumption of sustained inter-ethnic violence looked inevitable in the Ituri region, posing a serious threat to the success of the Lusaka process. As this chapter has demonstrated, the ferocious ethnic violence in Ituri was just one powerful example of why the July 11, 1999 ceasefire lay in shambles by January 2001. Every level of engagement in the DRC conflict—from the global, to the regional level of Central Africa and Great Lakes, to the provincial level within the DRC, to the tribal level, and even down to the village level—presented complex obstacles to the war’s resolution.

Social and Humanitarian Strife on Both Sides of the Front Lines

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS: DUE PROCESS, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, AND POLITICAL REPRESSION

Not surprisingly, human rights violations skyrocketed across the DRC as the conflict intensified in the fall of 1999. On November 4, news agencies reported that Kabila's government had restarted the practice of public execution, having carried out roughly 100 since its resumption. It was unclear whether these public executions were the result of civilian or military trials. Yet during this period, the military court system was unquestionably very aggressive in its prosecutions. Between January 28 and February 2, 2000, nineteen soldiers were executed in Kinshasa. They had been accused of murder, armed robbery, or revolt and had been condemned by a military court called the *Cour d'ordre militaire* (COM); sixty-one other persons who had been sentenced to death by the COM were scheduled to be executed soon thereafter. On February 15, Roberto Garreton, the special rapporteur on the DRC for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, expressed deep consternation about these executions: "The sentences handed down by the COM cannot be appealed. They are unfair and incompatible with the provisions contained in Article Fourteen of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights." Amnesty International published a new report on May 31, 2000, confirming that 100 civilians and soldiers had been executed by the DRC military trial system since early 1999. For example, on January 15, a fourteen-year-old child soldier known as Kasongo and an unidentified twenty-two-year-old soldier were executed within thirty minutes of the conclusion of their trials.

The DRC government had also begun to detain large numbers of political dissidents and journalists. Many people were reported to

have disappeared after being detained by members of the DRC security forces, possibly having been killed in secret. Most of those who had disappeared since early 1999 were members of the security forces accused of complicity with the armed opposition. And in many government prisons the conditions amounted to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment. At Boma prison in Likasi, prisoners were described as “walking skeletons,” with inmates receiving food only once a week. On July 13, 2000, the *Centre des Droits de l’Homme et du Droit Humanitaire* (CDH), a human rights organization in Lubumbashi, accused the authorities in the DRC of torturing detainees. The CDH quoted representatives of the victims’ parents who said that their children had been taken away by the security service, and that they had heard nothing since.

Journalists began experiencing repression by Kabila’s regime in early 1999. Thierry Kyalumba, editor of the biweekly *La Vision*, was tried by COM and sentenced to four years of imprisonment because his newspaper published an article that refuted a government claim that an armed opposition leader was dead. On September 22, 1999, Clovis Kadda, publishing director of *L’Alarme* newspaper, was arrested and severely beaten, receiving fifty-seven lashes for being a relative of an armed opposition commander. Other journalists working on *L’Alarme* were also targeted, including the editor Bosange Yema, who was forced into hiding, and his relatives were reportedly tortured in an effort to discover his whereabouts. In the summer of 2000, illegal military detentions of journalists who published articles critical of the government became more common. For example, *Journalistes en Danger* (JED), a Kinshasa-based organization fighting for the freedom of the press, publicized in July the arrests of two DRC editors working for independent publications. One was Emile-Aimé Kakese Vinalu of the weekly *Le Carrousel* and the other was Xavier Bonane Yanganzi of the biweekly *La Vision*. Vinalu had already been tried by a military court, while Yanganzi said he had been given no reason for his arrest, although most likely it was because *La Vision* had published an article mentioning that the Interpol had launched an inquiry about the Congolese leadership. The threat of a COM trial undoubtedly pushed many journalists into self-censorship.

This wave of government repression also touched prominent leaders of nonviolent oppositional political parties and their supporters, mostly in Kinshasa. Many were barred from traveling inside and outside the country, and some had their passports confiscated. In May 1999, two elderly men, Stephane Ibanga and Mutua Ngwefa, were arrested in Kinshasa together with five others accused of being sympathizers of the opposition party *Parti Lumumbiste Unifié* (PALU). Taken to a detention center, they were held in cramped dirty cells and subjected to a daily regime

of beatings with rifle butts and belts. They were released two weeks later after being so severely tortured that neither was capable of working any longer. At least seventy-six other members of the PALU were arrested around this time. About 156 PALU and other political detainees were released in December, but humanitarian observers were concerned that others were still in custody. Other forms of dissent were also repressed. Human rights activists, including trade unionists, were subjected to death threats, violence, intimidation, and detention. In January 2000, thirteen members of the student union at the University of Lubumbashi were arrested and detained for several days.¹

The repression by Kabila's regime began to draw the attention of UN high commissioner on human rights, Mary Robinson, in early 2000, eventually leading to a visit in October of that year. She began orchestrating international pressure on Kabila, contributing to his January announcement that the government had passed a law decreeing that the political parties could be "re-established," though under a new legal provision that stipulated that the minister of interior had the power simply to refuse to accept a new party even after its "re-establishment."² Kabila followed with an official amnesty decree in February 2000, leading to the release of seventy-nine from prison in March. These included Commandant Masasu Nindaga, Kabila's former security adviser. On March 28, the HRW announced that it welcomed the releases, but it urged Kabila to release the remaining detainees who were eligible under the new amnesty law. A joint government commission visited central prisons and detention centers to examine cases of political prisoners and decide whether or not to release them.

Upon concluding her visit to the DRC on October 4, Robinson expressed concern about the repeated violations of human rights, freedom of expression, freedom of association, and freedom of movement. Robinson gave a list to Kabila of 253 names of persons who had been arrested or arbitrarily detained, including human rights defenders, political figures, and journalists. She added that although the armed conflict has exacerbated the situation, the government was using the conflict as a pretext to subject Congolese peoples to unwarranted repression, despite the fact that most of the victims were themselves linked to the insurgency. She stated, "Most of the human rights violations by the security forces were taking place in areas far away from the armed conflict zones." Human rights abuses were committed by many different government security forces, including the *Agence Nationale des Renseignements* (the national intelligence agency known as the ANR) and *Détection Militaire des Activités Anti-Patrie* (the military intelligence agency known as DEMIAP), which were directly responsible to Kabila and detained people with impunity despite having no legal power of arrest.

The DRC government was not alone in flouting due processes and repressing political dissent during the conflict. In the eastern DRC, the armed opposition also carried out extensive violations.³ On January 17, 2000, there were reports of arbitrary arrests in Goma and Bukavu of people suspected of opposing the RCD, including journalists and human rights defenders. Many people were arrested and placed in detention centers on the unsubstantiated accusations of helping the Mayi-Mayi or Interahamwe. Many detainees were tortured, whipped or beaten, and raped. Some were transferred to Rwanda, where several “disappeared.” One human rights activist commented, “The vast majority of the victims of killings, torture and arbitrary arrest by the RCD are not members of these or any other armed groups.”

Similarly, many people arrested by Mayi-Mayi or Interahamwe were not RCD combatants.⁴ On February 12, 2000, Emmanuel Kataliko, archbishop of Bukavu, was arrested by RCD soldiers in Goma. He was seized when he disembarked from a plane and taken to Butembo instead of being allowed to return to his archdiocese in Bukavu. Archbishop Kataliko was returning from a trip to Kinshasa where he participated in the Episcopal Conference of the DRC. The RCD accused Kataliko of supporting the civil disobedience movement that took place in Bukavu from January 31 to February 6, 2000, and of having instigated ethnic violence. Kataliko had met with the UN envoy Roberto Garreton on September 4, 1999 in Bukavu to discuss the climate of repression facing members of civil society groups in North and South Kivu. On February 16, 2000, Garreton expressed concern about the deterioration of human rights in the eastern DRC. He was especially worried about Kataliko. He was also concerned about the safety of members of human rights organizations who were frequently submitted to cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment for publicly denouncing human rights in RCD-controlled territories.

The majority of the population in rebel-held territory were vehemently opposed to the rebellion, contributing to a climate of distrust, terror, and retribution. Rebel groups frequently failed to respect basic human rights and civic freedoms. According to human rights activists, a former government minister under the Mobutu regime, Désiré Lumbu Lumbu, died after a brutal interrogation by RCD-ML agents.⁵ On September 21, 2000, the HRW also asked the RCD-Goma to release a detained photographer and to reopen a radio station belonging to several civil society organizations.

The armed opposition had also established military courts that sentenced people to death. Children were reported to have been executed without a formal charge or trial. Ndongo, a fifteen-year-old child soldier, was publicly executed in Goma after a woman accused him of stealing a radio. Amnesty International reported that

“hanging men by their genitals, prohibiting detainees from urinating or defecating, raping, whipping, beating, and detention in water-logged pits are some of the treatments that those detained by the RCD and their allies are subject to.” Armed groups opposing the RCD and its backers also deliberately killed and abducted unarmed civilians. Groups of Mayi-Mayi fighters were responsible for the killing and torture, including rape, of people suspected of collaborating with the RCD.

THE KILLING OF CIVILIANS

Even more disturbing than the deprivation of basic human rights by belligerents was the carrying out of both the direct and indirect killing of civilians. The heavy toll on the civilian population was prophetically reflected in a global assessment issued by the UN General Assembly on August 31, 1999. It noted that the impact of the war on civilian populations had worsened recently since internal wars, now the most frequent type of armed conflict across the world, typically take a heavier toll on civilians than interstate wars because combatants increasingly have made targeting civilians a strategic objective, as in the DRC.⁶ On September 28, 1999, reports of the deliberate targeting of civilians in the DRC were condemned forcefully by the UN.⁷ In the eastern DRC, the cyclical nature of violence and reprisal between rebels and anti-rebel militia groups such as the Mayi-Mayi took the lives of countless civilians and created an atmosphere of terror. For example, reports of massacres of civilians by RCD forces surfaced in October 1999. Between October 15 and 20, RCD soldiers publicly killed at least twelve women accused of using witchcraft against them in Mwenga in South Kivu. Some of the women were reported to have been buried alive after being tortured, and in some cases, raped. At the same time, Burundian government soldiers burnt alive at least seven fishermen at Kazimia on the shores of Lake Tanganyika. Following confrontations between RCD and Mayi-Mayi combatants in and around Kahungue market near Sange in South Kivu, 100 civilians were massacred by RCD troops on October 23, 1999. Reports of Mayi-Mayi behaving similarly also surfaced, although usually on a smaller scale. For example, in October at least four women accused of helping RCD soldiers were killed by Mayi-Mayi in Walungu in South Kivu.⁸

A collective report collated by several human rights organizations, published on November 4, 1999, noted that during the first year of hostilities 6,000 civilians had been killed in the eastern DRC, many of them were victims of RCD responses to Mayi-Mayi attacks. The report also noted that 500 others had disappeared. The year 1999 had begun in an especially grim fashion with the massacre of at least 800 civilians by the

RCD and its backers at Makobola in South Kivu. The massacre lasted for three days, from December 30, 1998, to January 1, 1999. Civilians had been herded into houses and then set on fire. Local human rights groups have compiled a list of 800 people believed to have been killed in the Makobola massacre.

Massacres of civilians was by no means limited to the Kivus. In Province Orientale, as many as 300 people, among them many unarmed civilians, were killed during the fighting between Rwandan and Ugandan troops in Kisangani in August 1999. On August 17, 1999, it was reported that the fighting in Kisangani had trapped hundred of civilians who went to health centers to have children immunized against polio. Secretary General Kofi Annan requested that the women and children be allowed to return to their homes.⁹ Two days later, the HRW expressed grave concerns at the widespread shelling and fierce fighting that had turned the streets of Kisangani into a battlefield.¹⁰ Dozens of civilians were reported dead and many more injured. The parties to the current fighting were placing civilians in mortal danger since food, medical supplies, and other essentials were reaching dangerously low levels. The HRW condemned the callous disregard for civilian life shown by Rwandan and Ugandan forces and urged the international community and humanitarian agencies to intervene more forcefully to alleviate the suffering of the civilian population in Kisangani.¹¹

Kisangani remained a highly volatile and dangerous place for civilians throughout the first half of 2000. On May 7, 2000, heavy shelling between Rwandan and Ugandan troops in and around Kisangani erupted, leading to numerous civilian deaths. An investigation revealed twenty-eight dead (twenty-seven civilians and one soldier) and 159 wounded (155 civilians and four soldiers).¹² It was announced the same day that at least sixteen more civilians had been killed in renewed fighting in Kisangani between Ugandan and Rwandan troops.¹³

On June 27, 2000, the number of civilian deaths from the fighting was upgraded to over 600 with at least 3,000 civilians wounded, and the figure was still rising. A UN inter-agency assessment mission to Kisangani observed the extent of civilians' physical and psychological trauma and called for increased support from the international community to initiate a long-term rehabilitation effort.¹⁴ On July 12, 2000, the local Red Cross completed the collection and burial of hundreds of decomposing bodies. Up to 250 Red Cross volunteers and numerous ICRC staff were involved in removing the remains, which had presented a major threat to public health. The ICRC believed that at least 619 civilians and 141 soldiers had died in the week-long fighting. Nearly a month after a truce put an end to the most recent fighting, the ICRC was continuing to provide needed assistance to 1,700 people, mostly civilians, who were wounded in the clashes.¹⁵

THE REFUGEE CRISIS

Parallel to the killing of civilians was the refugee crisis. Despite the cease-fire agreement signed in Lusaka, fighting continued unabated in the Equateur province between Kabila's forces and the MLC and its backers. On July 14, 1999, almost 13,000 refugees, including 6,000 DRC government troops, fled the northern city of Gbadolite for the Mobaye and Bangassou areas of the CAR. A significant number of the soldiers were children who were taken from school and armed by Kabila's forces. This exodus followed the capture of Gbadolite and Yakoma by the MLC. DRC soldiers gave up their arms to the CAR authority upon crossing the river.¹⁶ On July 15, the UNHCR was undertaking a "status determination" exercise of the new arrivals. The CAR authorities asked the UN for help in dealing with this influx of Congolese refugees. While the UN response was positive, it nonetheless declined to take charge of the 6,000 soldiers. Fighting in the DRC was having a negative impact on the CAR, as the country was struggling to establish its own democratic institutions and thus could not afford a potentially destabilizing situation.¹⁷ As fighting continued in Equateur, an additional 6,000 refugees fleeing the fighting arrived at the port at Bangui, including an extra 250 soldiers from the Congolese regular army. This new exodus followed the MLC conquest of the town of Gemena.¹⁸

On July 23, 1999, UNHCR staff in the CAR said that in both Bangui and around the town of Mobaye the number of refugees had reached 14,000, including several thousand soldiers. The UNHCR set up a transit center in the port of Bangui, where food, medical care, and emergency aid were distributed to the refugees. In order to decongest the port, a first convoy carrying 500 Congolese left Bangui to Boubou, a site 350 kilometers from the capital. The UNHCR planned to move 5,000 refugees to Boubou in the following two weeks.¹⁹ On August 8, 2000, there were reports that new refugees from the DRC were seeking safety in the CAR, which was already hosting 7,000 people from the DRC's Equateur province. New arrivals were recorded in the CAR town of Zinga on the eastern bank of Ubangui River, 40 kilometers north of the town of Libenge. The UNHCR office in Mougoumba, across the river from Libenge, reported artillery fire around Libenge with FAC forces navigating in the CAR waters in pursuit of rebels. FAC planes flying over CAR territory at a very low latitude caused panic among the refugees and local population. The UNHCR and the CAR Red Cross distributed plastic sheets and blankets so that temporary shelters could be erected.²⁰ As fighting intensified in Libenge on September 4, 2000, nearly 10,000 refugees arrived again in the neighboring CAR, where aid agencies desperately tried to provide food and shelter. The tiny town of Mougoumba swelled to three times its normal population of 6,000 and became a

massive refugee camp housing women, children, merchants, civil servants, students, and soldiers. Dozens of refugees crossed the Oubangui River into this town every day to find refuge in the CAR.

By early September, CAR soldiers reported that the clashes in Libenge had reached a “massive scale.” Some of the people arriving in Mongoumba were civilians and soldiers who had been hiding for two months on an island in the middle of the Oubangui River. At least 9,695 fleeing the violence were registered, but hundreds of other in villages inaccessible by road could not be officially counted. Some refugees set up tents in town squares and along the water, and local populations complained of the pressures on their town caused by the mass arrival. Despite donations, food was insufficient and many refugees risked their lives to return to the war zones of Libenge and Batanga for food supplies.²¹ On November 23, 2000, 402 refugees from the DRC were said to be living in deplorable sanitary conditions with eighty-six families in Batalimo in the CAR. Thirty-six of them died of malaria and meningitis. Many more refugees were dispersed in the Mongonga prefecture. All of them were expected to be sent to a permanent and better equipped site at Lolange, 60 kilometers from Mongonga.²² By September 8, 2000, the number of refugees who had crossed to the CAR was estimated to be around 20,000.

Thousands of DRC refugees also crossed the river to take refuge in the Republic of Congo (ROC). Since July 1999, more than 8,000 of them had fled to the ROC region of Likouala. These refugees included 2,000 government soldiers and 6,000 civilians. All soldiers were disarmed upon their arrival. According to Major Ngolo of the ROC army, “The district of Betou, Dongou, and Impfondo were hosting the largest number of refugees. Several others evaded the control of local authorities and directly joined relatives and friends in Congo [ROC].”²³ More than 2,000 refugees boarded the boats on the Oubangui River and crossed over to the town of Betou and sailed down to Impfondo, more than 550 miles north of Brazzaville, on August 17, 1999.²⁴

A UNHCR team traveling to Impfondo on December 15, 1999 noticed that 13,000 Congolese were staying in villages and settlements scattered along a 300-kilometer stretch of the Oubangui River, which forms the border between the two Congos. Only a few hundred refugees had found shelter in the town of Impfondo itself.

By July 2000, Congolese refugees were also fleeing into the ROC from points south of Libenge. They were leaving the town of Imese, which had been reclaimed by government troops, as well as nearby villages—Nyela, Itula, and Mbombe—in the interior. Many of the new arrivals had previously begun a nightly pattern of crossing back and forth for food. Insecurity in the area also prevented outside contact with refugees south of Impfondo. This remote area, which contained an estimated

40,000 refugees, could be reached only by river.²⁵ Earlier that year, the UNHCR had sent several evaluation missions to the region and delivered materials for shelter.²⁶ By October 2000, the refugees also included over 100 “pygmies” among the recent arrivals, the first such group registered by the agency.

In February 2000, local dispensaries were also supplied with medicines and vaccines for children. Here also the distribution of food was unnecessary, because the majority of the refugees were fishermen and thus largely self-sufficient.²⁷ But things changed eight months later, when waves of refugees began pouring. In response, the UNHCR finally established a permanent presence in Betou. The 20,000 refugees living in that district were near starvation because shelter and food supplies were exhausted.²⁸ DRC refugees also converged in the ROC areas of Liranga and Ndjoundou, where the UNHCR distributed relief supplies to them, and medical teams treated 245 people for diarrhea and malaria. These arrivals included the first refugees from Mbandaka, a much larger town than the other sites in the region from which people were fleeing.²⁹ The refugees were fleeing not only the fighting, but also the alleged forced recruitment by government forces in the towns of Ngombe, Irebu, Mbandaka, and Loukolela.³⁰

On July 26, 2000, the UNHCR expressed great concern for tens of thousands of refugees scattered in a 700-kilometer-long corridor along the Congo and Ubangui Rivers. The refugees were suffering from a wide range of health problems and many required urgent medical attention. Humanitarian assistance was needed but difficult to reach them, because of the ban on travel along the Congo and Oubangui Rivers. Overall, the UNHCR estimated that 84,000 refugees scattered along the corridor.³¹ This figure included some 25,000 refugees who had arrived in the ROC before July 1999, 27,000 in Betou, 21,000 in Impfondo, and 22,000 in Loukolela.

By September 22, 2000, the number of registered refugees from the DRC into the ROC had risen to 117,650. A new influx of people into the northern Likouala region of the ROC followed clashes between Kabila's forces and the MLC. As of October 4, 2000, the UNHCR could no longer travel further up the rivers Congo and Oubangui, increasing anxieties about the welfare of refugees, who essentially were left to fend for themselves. As one UNHCR official stated, “It is true that refugees are well received by the locals, with whom they share the same customs. But in the long run, we must fear that the locals may feel invaded.” The refugees' numerical domination was indeed evident in Djoundou, the second largest town in the Likouala region; it initially had a population of 5,000, which the influx boosted to 8,500. Even more dramatic was the village of Malala south of Impfondo: the tiny settlement's 200 inhabitants were joined by roughly 2,800 newcomers.

Some strife between refugees and locals was beginning to break out in Malala. Hungry refugees arriving in the village rushed to the manioc and banana fields. Complaints about refugees taking local food crops were registered throughout the region. ROC authorities were more concerned with threat of potential instability the presence of DRC soldiers posed as many were hiding among the refugees. Since boat traffic had stopped along the two main rivers, some towns were experiencing shortages of fuel and other items. Prices increased and medical supplies were depleted, leading to increased occurrences malaria, diarrhea, and tuberculosis.³² The UNHCR and the MSF (Médecins Sans Frontières) had withdrawn their staff from the Likouala region because of the fighting.³³ Yet as the fall progressed, the situation improved. On October 14, 2000, the United States offered \$800,000 to assist the 100,000 DRC refugees in northern ROC.³⁴ And by November, the UNHCR deployed a team in Betou and Impfondo to help refugees there. Logistical concerns and continued fighting along the river, which occasionally spilled over to the ROC, had made access very difficult.³⁵

On the southern frontier of the DRC, Zambia was also affected by the waves of refugees fleeing the fighting in the DRC. Initially, the refugees were either located in the Kaputa transit camp for four to six weeks or spontaneously settled with Zambian villagers. In late April and early May, those in the transit center were relocated to a more permanent camp at Mwanze in Mporokoso district and spontaneous settlers were encouraged to join them. The permanent camp became fully functional and the Zambian Red Cross Society assumed responsibility as other agencies withdrew.³⁶ On July 15, 1999, tens of thousand of Congolese refugees arrived in the northern Zambian district of Kaputa. Roughly 11,500 of them were transferred to the Mwanze camp after being screened and processed by the UNHCR. Thousands of civilians and displaced soldiers continued to pour into northern Zambia over the following five days. The majority of these refugees came from Moba, Kalemie, and Pepa in Katanga. It took some of them three weeks to one month to trek 1,000 kilometers on foot and to get to Kalemie, where they boarded a ship to Nsumbu and then were settled temporarily in Kaputa. In this small town, the refugees took up whatever shelter was available, inundating buildings such as churches and an incomplete secondary school. The number of refugees was so high that they outnumbered local people of Kaputa by a ratio of five to one. Local people began to complain to authorities, saying they could no longer stand a further influx of refugees. A crucial step toward alleviating this problem was made on July 20, 1999, when the Zambian government identified a site for another camp at Kala, 30 kilometers off Kawambwa, to resettle new arrivals.³⁷ On July 20, the number of DRC refugees in Zambia was 15,294, but the number promised to continue to skyrocket due to the proximity of Pweto in Congo, which

was under fierce attack from the rebels.³⁸ This wave began to ebb at last after the city fell to rebels.

In the fall of 2000, the flow of refugees into Zambia once again picked up. Between November 1 and 16, more than 500 DRC soldiers and 1,000 civilians crossed the border, coming to the Kaputa district before being dispatched to other sites.³⁹ On November 10, 2000, the Zambian government in cooperation with the UNHCR agreed to issue identity cards to asylum seekers eligible to stay in urban Zambia in a move aimed at boosting data collection and curbing crime among the immigrants. The registration kits, worth \$150,000, were transferred to Zambia where authorities had complained about refugees deserting their settlements in rural areas for the bright lights of Lusaka and other urban centers despite the fact that only a handful of refugees were authorized to reside in urban centers.⁴⁰ On November 17, 2000, a report noted that refugees continued to trickle into the Kala camp. In the previous days, the UNHCR in Zambia registered 762 new refugees in Kaputa and moved them to the Kala camp further inland. Yet an even much bigger wave looked imminent. On November 21, 2000, fighting in southeastern DRC pushed thousands of refugees and government soldiers to the DRC-Zambia border.

UNHCR officials were worried that if the DRC town of Pweto on Lake Mweru was attacked by the RCD, a far bigger refugee crisis than the one precipitated by the rebel capture of Pepa would occur.⁴¹ This anticipated crisis became a reality between December 1 and 5, 2000, when about 10,000 Congolese civilians and 500 DRC soldiers crossed into Zambia from the DRC to escape fighting in and around Pweto. According to several reports, 50,000 to 100,000 civilians from Pweto were scattered in villages along the border within the first few days of December. Pweto was besieged by rebel forces beginning around December 1 and fell several days later.⁴² Once Pweto fell to the RCD, it was soon followed by the town of Kasenga. By December 8, 2000, the number of DRC troops having fled into Zambia increased to over 600. There were reports that “an entire brigade of DRC soldiers numbering up to 3,000 who have crossed, but are still out in the bush.”⁴³ Many of these refugees arrived at the refugee camp in Mwange in Mporokoso, and in December, the lack of funds for the facility was beginning to pose serious problems for that camp: the huge influx strained the capacities of relief agencies to supply enough food, and, to make matters worse, there seemed to be no slackening in the flow of refugees.⁴⁴ Overall, by mid-December the number of Congolese refugees in northern Zambia, including several thousand troops loyal to Kabila, was estimated to have reached as high as 50,000.⁴⁵

As fighting intensified in the eastern DRC, many refugees took refuge in Tanzania, crossing Lake Tanganyika and landing on the Kigoma

region, from which they would be sent to existing refugee camps further inland such as nearby Lugufu and Nyarugusu further northeast near the Burundian border. By July 1999, humanitarian agencies were struggling to provide refugees landing in Kigoma with food, health services, and drinking water, and the Lugufu camp began to struggle with severe overcrowding. The more distant Nyarugusu camp also struggled with overcrowding, sheltering roughly 37,000 people at that time, and faced many severe problems.⁴⁶ Officials at Nyarugusu had to deal with outbreaks of malaria and resort to rationing its limited food supply. By mid-July 1999, the Lugufu refugee camp in western Tanzania saw its population rising above 58,000, which was 18,000 over its designed capacity. The Tanzanian Red Cross warned that unless the facility was expanded soon, the Lugufu camp would be overwhelmed. Sanitary conditions there had degraded, contributing to an increased mortality rate.⁴⁷

Officials saw the situation as especially dire since more refugees were hiding out in the Congolese bush, waiting for an opportunity to cross Lake Tanganyika. An observer stated, "Leaving the DRC is dangerous. Some forces try to prevent it and people are killed in the attempt. It is also expensive. Private boat owners charge \$10 a head." Later in July 1999, people fleeing the conflict in the DRC were not persuaded by the recent peace agreement to stay in their homeland or return to it. The Lugufu camp continued to see its population rise, this time to more than 60,800. Food rations were reduced in Lugufu and measures were undertaken so as to attempt to maintain an adequate water supply.⁴⁸ The majority of the summer 1999 refugees in Lugufu were from the Fizi region of the DRC, and for many, it was a second move from their homes to this camp. As the conflict spread and intensified, thousands more were poised to make the difficult and costly trip across Lake Tanganyika.⁴⁹ An IFRC agent said, "It doesn't matter what they are saying at the peace talks, the people are not listening, they are crossing to Tanzania at the first opportunity." Tanzanian officials realized that if the overflow continued, another camp would have to be found. The Tanzanian government identified a potential site for a new camp at Karago, some 60 kilometers south of Kigoma. An UNHCR official stated, "Refugees are frequently unhappy because the previous living standards at Lugufu cannot be sustained because of the numbers with which we are coping. . . . There have been moments when it's been tense, when people have vented their frustrations."⁵⁰ The Red Cross and the IFRC launched a 1.7 million Swiss Franc appeal to build the new refugee camp, which would house 30,000 refugees.⁵¹

By August 13, 1999, the Tanzanian refugee camps were given a brief respite as the flow of refugees dropped significantly; only 250 refugees had made their way into Kigoma at the time.

From the end of October into early November, small groups of new refugees started once again to arrive in Tanzania since the situation in

the DRC remained unstable and unpredictable. Although there was no definite indication that there would again be mass movements of people from the DRC into western Tanzania, most officials believed that at least some refugees would continue to seek shelter at the Lugufu camp.⁵² Despite this stance in the flow, the massive presence of refugees in western Tanzania did exacerbate many social problems. On December 28, 1999, the Tanzanian police reported that they had confiscated a total of 1,016 guns and 5,650 rounds of ammunition in refugee regions of the country between January 1998 and September 1999. Most of the arms were brought into Tanzania by refugees and seized in the western regions of Kigoma, Kagera, Rukwa, and Tabora, which hosted tens of thousands of Burundian, Rwandan, and Congolese refugees. The weapons were being used by bandits to commit criminal offenses, threatening not only the lives of innocent civilians but also the development of the whole affected area.⁵³ On January 23, 2000, Kigoma regional officials announced that their prisons were congested with many refugee inmates from Burundi and the DRC. The Kigoma regional commissioner, Abubakar Mgumia, said that the prisons were overwhelmed by offenders who were mostly refugees charged with crimes such as rape, armed robbery, and murder. The Bangwe prison in Kigoma was meant for sixty-four inmates but now housed 419 lawbreakers. Thirty-seven inmates from the DRC were serving sentences for various offenses, mostly armed robbery.⁵⁴

In February 2000, only some 600 new refugees from the DRC were recorded as having entered Tanzania during that month. These refugees reportedly had fled from the DRC village of Baraka on the shore of Lake Tanganyika. These migrants claimed that they were forced to leave not because of fighting, but due to acute food shortages during the past few months.⁵⁵ Despite the lessening of the influx, on February 26, 2000, Tanzanian officials announced a potentially new crisis in which fourteen people had recently died of cholera in the western refugee areas; 403 people were suffering from the disease, as a result of contaminated water and food.⁵⁶

The inflow of refugees from the DRC to Tanzania continued to drop in March, having receded to roughly 300 that month. On April 12, 2000, the UNHCR said that the real number of refugees in Lugufu was 43,500, a recently reported total of 62,000 being inflated. The situation in the DRC continued to be unstable, and although the number of new arrivals had diminished, limited number of refugees continued to arrive and be accommodated in the Lugufu camp. But because the Lugufu camp was near or at its capacity of 50,000 by May 2000, plans to construct a new camp, Lugufu II, were initiated.⁵⁷ More capacity was needed since it was estimated that in the months since August 1999, fighting between the *Mayi-Mayi* and rebel forces in the east of DRC had driven 95,000 refugees from the DRC into Tanzania.

The issue of food scarcity in refugee areas of western Tanzania was becoming a major problem in the summer of 2000. On July 20, 2000, the UN's World Food Program (WFP) announced that food rations had to be cut significantly because of a lack of funds for the nearly half a million refugees in the region's camps. The organization announced that it was facing a shortfall of \$7.7 million between August and December of 2000.⁵⁸ The decision to decrease rations, if not handled with care, could incense the approximately 500,000 refugees living in the camps at that time. When refugees learned of this announcement, panic spread across the camps.⁵⁹ On August 18, 2000, the UNHCR renewed appeals for funds to feed refugees in Africa.⁶⁰ More sufficient funding did at last begin to trickle in by the fall of 2000. Indicative of this improvement was the opening of the new Lugufu II camp, with a planned capacity of 30,000 refugees, on October 2, 2000, at which time it welcomed an initial group of 859. The opening of the camp was made possible with funding from the EU. In Lugufu II, the refugees were registered and then given medical checks and vaccines as required; they were also provided with food and non-food items including plastic sheeting, kitchen sets, and blankets. Each family was given a plot of land measuring 10 by 20 meters and loaned tools to build mud-brick homes known as *blendees*. Bathing areas and communal pit latrines were positioned within easy reach.⁶¹

Mozambique also had to deal with major influxes of DRC refugees. On February 2, 2000, reports noted that people fleeing the conflict in the DRC and Great Lakes region started crossing from Zambia into the remote northwest Niassa district of Mozambique. They numbered an estimated 300, mostly women and children. An observer said, "They have come from the DRC and the Great Lakes after walking along the Zambian border and then crossing over into Mozambique."⁶² The UNHCR dispatched a team to Niassa to conduct a survey of the situation and sent emergency supplies to help the Mozambican government provide them with assistance.⁶³ Reports noted that some of these refugees were heading to South Africa on foot. This trend was not new. More than a year after the war started, many Congolese citizens fled their country and many were wending their way to South Africa. Such a case was illustrated by Mugodonzi, a technician from Uvira who left South Kivu in January 1999 and traveled for five months across Tanzania, Malawi, and Mozambique by boat, bus, and foot. When he reached South Africa, he walked through the Kruger National Park.⁶⁴

Many DRC refugees also converged in Malawi. On June 12, 2000, the Malawi government braced for an influx of refugees from the DRC since fighting had flared up between Ugandans and Rwandans in Kisangani. These new refugees tended not to register with the UNHCR in Malawi but simply joined relatives who had fled to that country previously, especially in Lilongwe and the commercial city of Blantyre, which had

experienced an influx at the beginning of the war seven months earlier. A tired elderly woman who just arrived said that her entire family fled Kisangani when the fighting broke out. She hitched a ride with several others to Tanzania and came down to Blantyre because she learned that one of her nephews had settled there.⁶⁵

Many Congolese fleeing the fighting in Province Orientale found refuge in Uganda. The situation in Province Orientale tended to be more complicated than in other areas of the DRC, because in addition to the conflict between militia groups and the RCD-ML and its backers, the region was stricken by strife between the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups. This situation generated a significant refugee crisis, with thousands of refugees fleeing to neighboring Uganda. By December 29, 1999, 6,587 Congolese and Rwandan refugees had made their way into southwestern Uganda and settled in the Orukinga camp some 30 kilometers from the city of Mbarara.⁶⁶ On August 5, 2000, UNHCR representatives traveled to the tiny Kisoro district, which occupies the furthest southwestern corner of the country and shares a direct border with the DRC. There they found an estimated 2,700 refugees from the DRC. The refugees had been coming since late July and the influx continued through early August. The refugees said that they were running away from rebel forces who accused them of harboring and aiding Interahamwe Hutu militia. These refugees came from North Kivu villages situated a few kilometers inside DRC, close to the border with Uganda and Rwanda. Many refugees were staying with relatives or friends, while others were renting rooms. Some were farmers who refused to be transferred further into Uganda away from their fields.

By January 6, 2001, the flow of refugees into Uganda once again surged due to intensified fighting between the Hema and Lendu. An estimated 600 families fled renewed ethnic fighting and found refuge in Uganda. Most of the refugees were Hema who crossed into western Uganda's Kabale district from the Ituri province.⁶⁷ On January 15, 2001, while humanitarian organizations tried to evaluate the impact of inter-ethnic clashes in Ituri, their agents reported that an estimated 3,500 people had found refuge across the border to Uganda since the Lendu attacked their Hema compatriots, forcing the latter to flee.⁶⁸ Also on January 15, UN agencies announced that they were sending relief items to western Uganda to help the estimated 8,000 refugees from the DRC. WFP agents noted that many refugees had been wounded by bullets, spears, and arrows. Some refugees had arrows and pieces of spears still lodged in their bodies. Hundreds, many traveling with their cattle, had been streaming across the border over the first two weeks of 2001, with the number swelling to 8,000. The refugees forded the meandering Semliki River of the Great East African Rift Valley running along the Uganda-Congo border and began to settle in the mountainous villages

in the western regions of Rwebishengo, Karugutu, and Ntokoro, which are between the southern shore of Lake Albert and the border town of Bundibugyo, 380 kilometers west of Kampala.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs)

On July 15, 1999, a full-scale war raged in central Equateur, which had already uprooted an estimated 126,000 persons. This was a conservative estimate since it only included the population of the Ikela region, a scene of fierce fighting since 1998. The main hospital had been looted of its supplies, and malaria and malnutrition were rife. In Boende, roughly 250 miles west of Ikela, some 12,000 displaced people occupied five sites. In Yalusaka, some 35 miles west of Ikela, the population shot up from 1,000 to 10,000 in just a few weeks due to the fighting in Ikela. In addition, the humanitarian situation in the Ikela region was increasingly grim. The precarious food and medical situation of the displaced was made even more difficult by frequent military harassment. Some groups of IDPs were cut off from humanitarian personnel because of intense military activities. By December 5, 1999, the struggle to control nearby Bokungu created massive internal displacement of people as well.⁶⁹ Roughly a year later—in the late fall of 2000—the situation in the Ikela region had become worse. The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Kinshasa announced that some 8,000 displaced people in Bokungu had no access to drinking water and that the overpopulation there had become alarming. On November 9, 2000, OCHA published a report evaluating the situation of the displaced in the Mbandaka, Bokungu, and Ikela areas between October 17 and 27. It estimated that about 55,000 persons had been dislocated and resettled between Boende, Bokungu, and Yalusaka.⁷⁰

A considerable portion of the population of the Kasai Orientale province experienced internal displacement over the course of the conflict. People living along the frontline fled the fierce fighting between RCD and DRC government forces and headed southeast, mainly into central Katanga. The military pressure exerted by RCD troops on the frontline near Kabinda generated considerable instability. An estimated 6,000 IDPs were already in southern Kasai Oriental, including the population of Lubao and its vicinity who fled westward toward Kabinda in early 1999 and who were still unable to return home because of the fighting. The persistence of insecurity even in relatively stable areas impeded the return of persons who had fled their homes since the outbreak of the conflict, thus keeping the number of IDPs high. A joint WFP and French government mission to the besieged rebel town of Kabinda that commenced on September 15, 1999 identified some 20,000 IDPs there

who had fled other war zones since June 1999. The food situation of this group and that of the city as a whole was found to be alarming.

To the south of Kasai Oriental in the province of Katanga, war was also displacing a large number of people. Between July and August 1999, DRC authorities granted the UN humanitarian agencies full access to the war zones in the Katanga province, thus enabling them to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the extent and patterns of the displacements. Some 54,500 IDPs were identified, but it was estimated that about 100,000 were impossible to reach due to sustained military activity between RCD and Mayi-Mayi forces. The overall humanitarian situation in displaced communities was found to be precarious, with high mortality rates due to overall malnutrition and diseases such as measles. Only a small number of IDPs were receiving systematic assistance in the province.

The assessment team witnessed the large-scale devastation that the fighting had wrought upon the region. The situation of returnees and those still living in the bush, estimated at around 120,000, was described as verging on the catastrophic, with widespread starvation observed. In spite of serious hardships, the displaced remained reluctant to return due in part to radio messages emanating from Lubumbashi warning the population that if they returned to rebel-occupied towns, pro-government forces would consider them to be collaborators when they regained control of northern Katanga. By January 21, 2000, the WFP had created a fourth corridor in southeastern DRC to deliver food aid by barge to the town of Kalemie from Kigoma across Lake Tanganyika. The establishment of this route allowed the WFP to quickly feed the tens of thousands uprooted by conflict in particular in northeastern Katanga and South Kivu.⁷¹

By early 2000 in northern Katanga, approximately 10,000 persons had fled fighting in Manono and Mbudi to settle in Dubie, where they were cared for by the MSF. The dispersed populations of the Manono zone in Kachambuyu, Panda-Kuboko, Mayumba, Kamina-Lenge, Kakamba, and Katengo remained inaccessible to humanitarian groups. In northeastern Katanga, IDP figures for January 2000 were estimated around 190,000 people. On February 2, particularly severe food shortages and malnutrition were reported among the large number of the displaced in northeastern Katanga. A UN report issued on May 20, 2000 noted that although 7,000 of the displaced in the area had found refuge in towns, 70,000 others were dispersed in the 20,000 square kilometer area between the mining towns of Manono and Kabalo. The displaced people had requested the UN not only for food and medicines but also for seeds and tools, expressing a wish to become self-reliant. But by February 14, 2000, the humanitarian agency Action Against Hunger (AAH) reported that the overall IDP situation in Katanga was

worsening day by day. Approximately 20,000 displaced people lived in camps or were hosted in families. It conducted a survey that revealed that over 5,000 children were malnourished. The organization opened four feeding centers.⁷²

In South Kivu, the fighting between the insurgency and the counter-insurgency forces caused massive local displacements. Following the signing of the Lusaka ceasefire in August 1999, many people started to return home. In Shabunda and its surroundings, at least 57,000 of the IDPs—roughly 50 percent of the population—returned to their communities, especially along the shore of Lake Tanganyika, such as in the village of Makobola. Many of the 10,000 displaced in and around Bukavu expressed a wish to return to their homes as well, so several humanitarian organizations began to coordinate a small-scale effort to accommodate them.⁷³ At Walungu, 4,500 people were provided with assistance that enabled them to return to their villages. In the Uvira district, a total of 44,025 displaced people were also given assistance in returning. In total, some 250,000 people who had fled their homes in 1990 had returned, but many of them were still reliant on external aid for survival. The WFP stated, “There are still 100,000 to 120,000 people who today do not live normally in their original surroundings.” By the end of September 1999, IDP numbers increased to 260,000 people. Many of those living along the northern road on the Ruzizi plain were given seed to restart farming activities, while those living in Uvira and along the southern road out of town were given food aid.⁷⁴ Humanitarian assistance was also distributed to IDPs in and around Bukavu. The relative improvement in access allowed the relief community to locate most of the 195,000 IDPs in this region of the DRC.

The trend toward return in South Kivu suffered a reversal at the end of September 1999 due to reoccurrence of hostilities triggered by the counter-insurgency tactics of the rebels. New departures in the province undermined the return and resettlement trends that had started in June and August. Once again significant groups of people, primarily residents of coastal villages and the Moyen Plateau, were on the move, slowing down the return movement to the Shabunda zone. Persisting tensions in Hauts Plateaux and Moyen Plateaux around Katana and Walungu pushed many people out into Tanzania. Clashes between militia forces and those of RCD-Goma pushed more refugees into Bukavu and outlying towns where aid workers were able to provide them with aid, but many others remained in more remote regions where dangerous security conditions prevented WFP efforts from reaching them. WFP aid workers did not dare travel outside of a 60–70 kilometer (roughly 40 to 45 miles) perimeter around Bukavu. As a result, more and more cases of malnutrition were cropping up even in this relatively fertile region.

By early 2000, Mayi-Mayi attacks intensified in the environs of Bukavu despite the rebels' claim of recent military successes.⁷⁵ In Bukavu and its outskirts, an estimated 55,000 IDPs arrived in January 2000.⁷⁶ On February 1, 2000, it was reported that around 10,000 people had fled from Kalonge toward Bukavu. According to humanitarian sources, the exodus was most likely triggered by Interahamwe activity and reprisal actions from the RCD and Rwandan troops around the northeastern edge of the Kahuzi-Biega National Park. On February 14, 2000, it was reported that an estimated 25,000 people had fled villages north of Bukavu amid a wave of vicious attacks by Hutu militia. Staff members of the ICRC, carrying out routine fieldwork in the region, came across hundreds of people trudging along the roads and through forest with as much of their belongings as they could carry. They spoke of horrific attacks in which family and neighbors were slaughtered, women raped, and homes looted and burned. Most of the displaced persons were able to find shelter with local populations in the Kabare and Katana zones. But the host families themselves were poor and did not have the means to feed and care for guests.

The ICRC had been operating a health care center in Kabare providing medical services to the new arrivals and attempting to address cases of measles that were on the rise among the displaced. The ICRC encouraged refugees and their host families to bring in the children for vaccination.⁷⁷ People were also fleeing from the area around Shabunda where fighting was believed to be taking place deep in the forest. Overall, some sources estimated the total number of displaced people to be 195,000 in South Kivu, although there was a consensus that this number was a guesswork at best since many in remoter areas remained uncounted.

North Kivu was not exempt from these population dislocations. In 1999, military operations in the province took place from mid-June through mid-July, dramatically affecting the densely populated area in the Masisi, Rutshuru, and Walikale triangle. UN humanitarian officials assessing the IDP situation in the province advanced a conservative figure of 160,000 displaced persons, or 20 percent of the population of the triangle. Population movements in this region stepped up significantly in October 1999 and continued through July 2000 due to the fighting between rebels and insurgents. For example, between July and September 1999, a total of 42,425 people were displaced, including 29,425 who were helped in returning to their villages, given food aid as well as tools and seeds to restart farming. At the beginning of November, the first phase of an IDP registration project co-sponsored by the WFP was completed. A total of 155,000 newly displaced persons were registered throughout the area, excepting Masisi and Walikale. The security situation in these latter locations remained highly volatile as rebel forces attempted to establish full control in these areas known for its significant

concentration of insurgents. The total figure of IDPs in North Kivu was expected to rise considerably once the Masisi-Walikale figures became accessible.

Another area of North Kivu experiencing tremendous population displacement was that in and around the town of Sake, some 15 miles west-northwest of Goma. On April 14, 2000, the ICRC managed to carry out a survey there and noted that 12,000 newly displaced people had arrived since the beginning of April. The number soon thereafter escalated to roughly 30,000 as insecurity in the area increased. These newcomers lacked any assistance and were living with relatives.⁷⁸ On July 17, 2000, humanitarian sources spoke of a worsening situation around the Sake area, most worrisome being attacks by men in uniform on the displaced persons' camp. After an attack in which fifty people were killed, the camp was set on fire and several bodies were burnt beyond recognition.⁷⁹

In the spring of 2000, the ICRC recorded 44,000 displaced people within Goma itself.⁸⁰ Over the course of the summer, the situation in Goma became even worse. In early July, those living in Goma and its surroundings were victimized by a systematic campaign of intimidation by local militias. Villagers were so afraid that they slept in the forest at night. "The pressure on villagers is so great that they can no longer live a normal life," said Nigel Marsh of the NGO World Vision.⁸¹ On October 27, 2000, the WFP reported that it had provided assistance to 290,000 of the 403,000 registered IDPs in North Kivu. Yet shortages of cereals prompted the WFP to significantly reduce its activities and focus on the most vulnerable groups through its nutrition centers. No new deliveries had occurred since mid-September and the next distribution was to take place in late October, comprising 448 tons of cereals. Malnutrition was reported as still prevalent in South Kivu, especially in the forest belt where armed confrontations continued to hinder humanitarian interventions. The Bukavu-Uvira-Bukavu-Walungu and Shabunda roads were for all purposes closed to humanitarian intervention. Four flights carrying WFP food into Shabunda were not enough to meet the needs there.⁸² The airlifted supplies did provide food aid for 11,670 displaced persons, including 230 children and orphans. According to an early November 2000 assessment, there were 640,000 displaced in North Kivu, with only 360,000 having access to humanitarian aid.⁸³

Significant internal dislocation also affected the population of Province Orientale, especially in Kisangani due to the fighting between Rwandan and Ugandan troops there. On June 12, 2000, the ICRC counted 7,564 people who had fled their homes and taken refuge at six different sites within Kisangani.⁸⁴ An additional 10,000 people were spread out within a five-mile radius of the city. A week later, residents returned to the city as Rwandan and Ugandan troops ceased fighting. Humanitarian sources

reported, "Some 15,000 people crossed the bridge over the Tshopo River into Kisangani. Crowds of residents were waiting on the river bank for the relatives and friends to return." The ICRC distributed plastic sheeting for shelter and collected corpses in hopes of avoiding a cholera outbreak.⁸⁵ The organization also delivered medical aid to hospitals and other facilities in Kisangani.⁸⁶

Another area of Province Orientale that experienced massive internal displacement was the Ituri district. In mid-July 1999, inter-ethnic clashes uprooted an estimated 30,000 people of both Lendu and Hema groups. The fighting occurred in an area delineated by the villages of Drodoro, Djugu, Faraki, and Rethi. Another 50,000 IDPs were identified west of the regions of Opala and Dungu in the upper northern corner of the province near Isiro.⁸⁷ On September 2, 1999, MSF began a large-scale measles vaccination program in Province Orientale. The campaign was launched in response to a measles epidemic that had erupted among the estimated 40,000 people displaced by the fighting between the Hema and Lendu. Cholera and bubonic plague cases also increased sharply. The displaced lived in situations with little sanitation, and most of the health centers in the region had been looted, torched, or abandoned. And because most the people could not work in their fields, there was a shortage of food and subsequent malnutrition. The measles epidemic resulted in part from this combination of underfeeding, overcrowding, and a lack of vaccination.⁸⁸

On September 15, 1999, humanitarian organizations conducting a damage assessment of the zones of the province affected by inter-ethnic clashes noted that intensified troops movement in western and southern regions had hampered the return of IDPs. From July to September, the estimated number in Province Orientale was put at 85,000, and 7,000 were believed dead. At the time of this evaluation, the humanitarian situation was described as "catastrophic" with widespread outbreaks of cholera, measles, and the plague.⁸⁹ At the time of their displacement, the population abandoned their fields, which were ready for harvest. They, therefore, missed not only the harvest but also the planting season. Concerned by the threat of a major food crisis, the ICRC organized a large-scale assistance program to distribute food rations and non-food kits to 85,000 people: 50,000 by the end of 1999, and then 35,000 by the end of January 2000. Distribution started with Bunia, then Katoto, Pimbo, and Djugu. OCHA and Oxfam also surveyed the Rimba-Nioka-Dhera zone in the Ituri and identified an extra 40,000 displaced hidden in the forest since mid-1999.

On February 2, 2000, in the Ituri, a large number of people were reported to have been killed by violence, while an untold number had died of illnesses and epidemics common to those living in marginal circumstances in the bush without adequate access to drinking water or

medical care. These adverse conditions persisted even though security conditions had greatly improved in the region. The OCHA began to work toward facilitating the return of the displaced in Ituri. Also contributing to displacement in the Ituri region were military activities by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), which pushed an estimated 25,000 people into the Dungu area of Province Orientale. The displaced were crossing the border to flee SPLA incursions into refugee camps in the southern Sudan. Tensions persisted between the local displaced population and the Sudanese refugees, whose numbers eventually reached 70,000.

The internal displacement problem also touched areas that were not immediately affected by the fighting. In November 1999, a camp opened on the outskirts of Kinshasa, initially to house 400 displaced persons repatriated by the UNHCR from the CAR capital of Bangui. The number soon increased to 1,100, mostly women and children fleeing the fighting in Equateur. Stretched out above the Congo River, the camp was surrounded by dense vegetation and rice fields cultivated by local farmers.

In addition to these displacements caused by the war, flooding of the Congo and Ndjili Rivers prompted authorities to evacuate some 5,000 Kinshasa residents on November 30, 1999. At the time, Kinshasa had about 5 million inhabitants, but the population grew with the arrival of several hundred thousand displaced from fighting with rebel groups.⁹⁰ On December 3, 1999, relief organizations estimated that flooding had affected some 45,000 residents of parts of Kinshasa that were under water. Officials moved many of these displaced to twenty-two temporary sites in Kinshasa. The affected people were still being counted and health teams were being set up since there were major risks of disease.⁹¹ In addition, the early December floods compounded the food problem not only in the city but across the country since the capital was a major staging area.⁹²

An UN report on the DRC as a whole published on July 20, 2000 noted that there were 1.3 million IDPs in ten of the eleven provinces, and only 50 percent of these were in easily accessible areas. The other half, scattered in four zones held by the government and three held by rebel groups, had remained largely inaccessible over the past two years. The stability after the signing of the Lusaka agreement was short-lived; after the fighting resumed, large displacements affected the civilian population most notably in the Kivus and the Katanga, Kasai, Equateur, and Orientale provinces. These IDPs were subjected to enormous deprivation, suffering, and death.⁹³ By January 12, 2001, humanitarian officials estimated that the number of Congolese displaced from their homes and consequently cut off from their means of survival had skyrocketed from 750,000 in early 2000 to 2 million.

THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

The humanitarian crisis in the DRC was further aggravated by a deep economic crisis across the country. On July 15, 1999, the DRC government announced that it would try to ease economic hardship by further tightening its already tight monetary policy in areas that it controlled. A foreign exchange ban remained in place, but several food and fuel importers were given special authorization to make transactions in hard currency. Most observers considered this modification as a half-measure that had little or no impact on the economy. And despite these measures, the devaluation of the national currency continued at an accelerated rate and bolstered the inflation. A sharp rise in price of a variety of commodities and sustained fuel shortages contributed further to the DRC's economic volatility. One measure the central government took to try taming this volatility was a decree in early July 1999 mandating that all disbursements made by public companies had to be approved by a committee consisting of representatives of several DRC ministries. The government also attempted to impose tight fiscal restrictions on public expenditures due to the declining of the country's main source of revenue: diamond mining. This industry was threatened by rebel advances in Kasai and the imprisonment of the entire senior staff of MIBA, the largest state-owned diamond-mining company.

On August 24, 1999, economic indicators depicted a relentless decline. Though the speed of currency depreciation was less than that in mid-July, it was still very high: 9.5 Congolese francs against US\$1. Soaring inflation affected the entire Congolese economy. Statistics revealed by the Central Bank indicated that the country's main economic activities had been severely curtailed. Copper and cobalt production as well as diamond mining that were the only major sources of state income were experiencing a dramatic recession. Gecamines, one of the largest and most competitive employers in the country, found itself unable to operate under the new circumstances and proposed a drastic restructuring that entailed the loss of as much as 60 percent of its 26,000-strong workforce. The impact of revenue loss from dwindling industrial production was not felt much by the population at large since the earnings of this sector were invested into the defense forces and, to a lesser extent, the cumbersome civil service.

Decline in the agricultural sector, however, affected nearly everyone, by resulting in the inflation of food prices and the reduction in consumption. According to the Central Bank of the DRC, the production of palm oil—an essential staple food—in July 1999 was almost 25 percent less than the July 1998 output. In the beginning of August the government announced its intention to impose a strict control of the prices of essential commodities in the private sector. This dire situation worsened

on September 13, 1999, when it was announced that diamond exports in August to the United States had declined to \$17.8 million compared to \$31.6 million in August 1998. Reuters quoted sources in the mining industry as saying that many diamonds mined in rebel-held areas were sold to traders in Angola or diverted to Brazzaville. In addition, gold exports had come to a halt as well. Since February 1999, the rebel occupation of gold-producing areas had prevented the government from collecting revenue on gold exports.⁹⁴

On September 14, 1999, Economy Minister Bemba Saolona, father of rebel leader Jean-Pierre Bemba, expressed disappointment over what he called the failure of his efforts to foster a better partnership between business and the government. He said that many businessmen continued to indulge in “malpractice” associated with the corrupt regime of former president Mobutu Sese Seko. He found this situation especially alarming since Kabila’s government had recently suspended some economic control measures designed to prevent such behaviors.⁹⁵ Unpaid salaries were also increasingly becoming a serious source of instability in Kinshasa. The increased frequency of strikes, some of which were contained by armed forces, reflected this situation. To remedy this problem, the DRC government paid its salaries in arrears, primarily to the civil servants and military, and also approved an increased salary scale to mollify workers. To achieve this end, the Central Bank had to resort to printing a large number of twenty-franc notes, which in turn pushed the devaluation of the Congolese franc by over 20 percent.

Facing uncontrollable price inflation, both rebel and government authorities attempted to contain the devaluation. Nonetheless, a 25 to 30 percent inflation rate persisted in the Kinshasa market.⁹⁶ In addition, on November 15, 1999, government authorities imposed an official foreign exchange rate on all transactions, restricting the use of foreign currencies only to some exceptional cases. The official rate of 4.9 Congolese francs against US\$1 represented roughly 30 percent of the Congolese franc’s market value. The government zealously applied all of the coercive aspects of its tightened monetary policies that it announced in mid-September 1999. These coercive measures did manage to hold back further depreciation of the national currency, but as of mid-October, the exchange rate fell again to its pre-reform level. Strict monetary control imposed by the Central Bank in conjunction with the Law Enforcement Ministry had also slowed down inflationary processes in the market, but only in a coercive and artificial manner.

These stringent monetary measures had a devastating impact on businesses. Significant business closures and expatriations contributed to a further shrinking of what was left of the local economy. The value of the Congolese franc continued to decline, even in areas out of government control. On January 21, 2000, the Central Bank of the DRC devaluated

it, fixing it at the level of 9 against US\$1, while the parallel exchange rate climbed to about thirty-one Congolese francs. This depreciation, followed by a significant rise in the overall price levels, dealt a major blow to the food security of the local population. Inflationary trends continued at a galloping pace in government-held regions. The threefold difference between the official and real exchange rates continued to affect humanitarian agencies, some of which were no longer capable of modifying their limited project budgets to obtain goods and services fixed at the parallel exchange rate. A report published on February 15, 2000 described the continued spectacular decline of the DRC wartime economy. But compared to the period of November and December 1999, the overall inflation rate had slowed down slightly in January 2000 but was still at the debilitating level of 20 percent in Kinshasa. No positive changes were observed in the food market, which continued to operate at an estimated 60 percent deficit from prewar levels.

By March 2000, the inflationary slowdown was continuing in government-held areas. The Central Bank rate for one Congolese franc remained at 9 to US\$1, whereas the parallel rate was around 40. Studies looking at purchasing power within different segments of the DRC population demonstrated that the well off saw a decrease in their purchasing power by 11.6 percent, while the poorest families suffered a 15.9 percent decrease in their ability to make ends meet. A United Nations Development Program (UNDP) associate administrator visited the DRC from March 13 through 15, resulting in UN agencies being granted an exchange rate of 22.5 Congolese francs to US\$1. Although this compromise was seen as a useful official recognition of the problem, it still meant that all programs and operations were costing the UN twice as much as they had been budgeted initially.

The DRC's economy also suffered at the hands of the Kabila regime's allies. Reports surfaced in August 2000 that the Zimbabwean government, a key Kabila ally, had come to a secret agreement with Kabila. In exchange for the services of a third of Zimbabwe's army—about 12,000 soldiers—fighting alongside Kabila's forces, the Zimbabweans were allowed to redirect proceeds from the rich copper and cobalt mines around Lubumbashi and Kolwezi in Katanga into their own coffers. They had similar arrangements in place in the diamond and gold mines of the Eastern Kasai region and, in addition, were tapping electricity from the hydroelectric dam at Inga in the DRC, paying for it in Zimbabwe dollars. The Angolan government, another key Kabila ally, secured control of the oil fields along the DRC border, notably in the Cabinda enclave. With elections on hold at the time of the alleged allied pillaging, voters had no recourse to correct this problem. Overall, the wealth diverted to Kabila's allies unquestionably contributed to the overall social misery in the DRC.⁹⁷

The growing international perception that “blood diamond” revenues were fueling major conflicts in southern Africa further hastened the deterioration of the DRC economy. The joint venture diamond partnership between the Zimbabwean company Osleg, headed by Zimbabwean defense force commander Lieutenant General Vitalis Zvinavash, and the well-connected DRC firm Comiex had their listings turned down on the London Stock Exchange.⁹⁸ A new mining consortium, Oryx Diamonds, entered the fray and attempted to change the industry’s reputation in the region. The Kabila government gave Oryx a concession to mine diamonds near the southern town of Mbuji-Mayi, held by Zimbabwean forces. Oryx denied that its gems were “blood diamonds,” but concern was raised over the privatization of the conflict in the DRC and the money made by senior officials on all sides in the war. Alex Yearsley of the environmental justice NGO Global Witness commented, “The war has nothing to do with ideological interests or national security, but personal exploitation and enrichment.”⁹⁹

The economic picture was quite different in the rebel-held east. As in the west, the signing of the Lusaka agreement did not help initiate any recovery trends. But since the Kivus and Province Orientale were isolated from the rest of the country and relatively well integrated into the economy of the Great Lakes region, these areas avoided the hyperinflation and economic collapse that ravaged the western DRC. The limited amount of currency in circulation (Congolese francs supplied from Kinshasa) and the flow of more stable regional currencies, such as the Ugandan shilling, hampered the capacity of farmers in the Kivus to sell their crops to western DRC. In addition, tight fiscal measures introduced by RCD authorities in 1999 contributed to the region’s relative stability. At the time, the Great Lakes region was booming economically, especially in relation to the rest of southern Africa. Rwanda’s dynamic economy and its increasing demand for farm produce from the Kivus helped create a self-contained RCD-controlled economic space that did not experience dramatic inflation or depreciation of currency.

But this regional economic stability came at the price of Rwandan domination of areas held by RCD-Goma. This situation was most strikingly illustrated by an agreement signed on November 29, 1999, between the prefecture of Kisangani and the Rwandan prefecture of Butare. The two cities were to cooperate in the fields of education, agriculture, and economy, among other areas. The economic cooperation included the exchange of crops from Butare for palm oil from Kisangani. Businessmen in Kisangani dealing in precious stones were encouraged to invest in Butare. Educationally, more exchanges between universities in Kisangani and Butare were mandated. To further strengthen these connections, 500 Kisangani residents, including local political and administrative

leaders, were to be sent to Rwanda for a one-month “ideological training” session at a center near Kigali.¹⁰⁰

By the fall of 1999, the relatively stable economic conditions in the rebel-held east began to erode since many soldiers and powerful people associated with the RCD-Goma faction began selling gold, diamonds, timber, and coffee from North Kivu for their own profit. Many were chartering unauthorized flights to export precious stones and transporting timber by truck, all the while avoiding customs fees.¹⁰¹ On October 13, 1999, the Department of Mines in rebel-held territory issued a decree banning traders from engaging in “any mineral-related activities in the entire liberated territory until a new order is given.” The decree was issued due to the “urgent need to put the mineral and craft sectors in order.” But traders failed to submit monthly statistics on their purchases and sales, and fees were not consistently paid.¹⁰² Chaos was further spread by the Rwandan occupying forces, which was accused of mining columbite-tantalite, a mineral used in cellular phones and weapons, commonly known as coltan. RCD commander Jean-Pierre Ondekane denied the charge, telling the journal *La Libre Belgique*, “Rwanda had no extraction arrangements; local people had gathered the mineral by hand so they could sell it and feed their children.”¹⁰³ The Rwandan army, which was supporting the RCD in the east, also contributed to the economic chaos by giving its troops the mandate to “protect” and manage valuable resources and funds in rebel-held areas. Rebel leader Emile Ilunga established a joint commission to monitor the exploitation of resources and the ensuing proceeds by both rebel and Rwandan forces. Rebel spokesman Kin-Kiey Mulumba did not deny accusations of Rwandan exploitation, stating, “We are engaged in a joint struggle against Kabila, which calls for the pooling of resources and mobilization of funds to continue the war.”¹⁰⁴

By the summer of 1999, private businesses in the east, which never ceased to operate on both sides of the frontline, had begun to draw Congolese francs into the east from Kinshasa, taking advantage of the large difference between the foreign exchange rates in Kinshasa and Goma (ranging from 100 to 150 percent). The accelerated influx of Congolese francs into the east and resumption of transactions between the two “monetary zones” were expected to reduce the disparity in foreign exchange and inflation rates in the aftermath of the Lusaka agreement. Observers believed that the rapprochement between the two economies might undermine the stability in the Kivus in the short run but at the same time could check inflation in the west, most notably in the food market. In hopes of containing the devaluation, rebel leaders fixed the foreign exchange at five Congolese francs to US\$1.¹⁰⁵ The foreign exchange rates continued to be stable at six Congolese francs to US\$1 for the month of July 1999 but then rose 45 percent by December 1999. By March 2000,

the rate was approximately 22 Congolese francs to US\$1. Rumors of a drastic revision of the foreign exchange ban circulated in mid-July 2000, but the restrictive policies remained unchanged. The official exchange rate valid for all transactions and payments was fixed at 23.5 Congolese francs against US\$1 at the end of June, while the parallel or market rate hovered around 55.

More systematic cash smuggling between Kinshasa and the eastern DRC in the beginning of May 2000 led to a 30 percent devaluation of the Congolese franc in the east. Rebel authorities accused foreigners of money smuggling and introduced strict control and search procedures at the eastern DRC's entry points. These measures apparently paid off as the exchange rate dropped from 40 Congolese francs in the beginning of May to 28 francs by July and appeared to remain stable.¹⁰⁶ To increase its revenues, RCD-Goma established customs posts in May and June 2000 to collect taxes on products entering Goma from the RCD-Kisangani, Beni, and Butembo. The RCD-Goma faction decided that all goods from areas controlled by the RCD-Kisangani as well as Beni and Butembo—areas referred to as “Province du Ruwenzori”—were to be treated as items coming in from a foreign country. Traders were thus required to pay customs duties when importing goods into RCD-Goma zones. After a few months of this policy, trade ground to a halt and the futility of the new tariffs became apparent. Goods piled up at customs posts until they were finally released without payment of levies in October. RCD-Goma authorities also removed a customs-collection roadblock set up at Rutshuru.¹⁰⁷

By late 2000, the economy of the eastern DRC was becoming increasingly chaotic. On November 30, 2000, the RCD-Goma revealed that a new multinational corporation called Somigel had been given a contract to exploit the coltan resources in the region. The company was described as “a provisional association” that grouped together three foreign partners: Africour of Belgium, Promeco of Rwanda, and Cogecom of South Africa. These companies were already legally registered in the DRC and were paying taxes. RCD-Goma authorities began awarding a wide variety of lucrative contracts to the highest bidders.¹⁰⁸ One Lebanese businessman gained complete control of diamond trade in the Kisangani region by these means in the summer of 2000. An RCD-Goma official justified the move in this manner: “We expect to trade with a single trader, rather than running after many. This simplifies trade management.”¹⁰⁹

In areas controlled by the RCD-ML, a similar state of economic chaos could be observed since rebel officials and soldiers were also selling off rights to exploit natural resources. In August 1999, it was reported that the RCD-ML had instituted a threefold increase in income taxation. Local sources reported that in Beni, Butembo, and Haut-Uele districts of North Kivu and Province Orientale the Ugandan-backed

authorities had unilaterally introduced a mechanism for collecting fiscal revenues at the customs posts.¹¹⁰ The RCD-ML also appointed a committee to manage the Kilo-Moto gold mines in the far northeast of Province Orientale and abrogated all previous contracts concerning them. The Kilo-Moto gold mines, one of the largest operations in the area, was previously run by a Ugandan firm called Victoria. Following the abrogation, rebel leader Ernest Wamba dia Wamba in early 2000 signed a contract with a businessman from Grenada to manage these mines.¹¹¹ But this US\$16 million deal between the First National Bank in Grenada and Wamba caused friction within the rebel group. The RCD official Jim Balikwisa commented, “We have read about the deal in the newspaper. Wamba has refused to call a meeting to explain it.” Wamba’s prime minister, Mbusa Nyamwisi, defended the agreement, stating that it held out “the prospect of improved health and transport infrastructures in areas held by RCD-ML.”

World Bank research published in May 2000 suggested that most recent civil wars were fueled by rebel groups competing with national governments for control of natural resources—such as diamonds and coffee—rather than by political, ethnic, or religious differences. This new report on the economic causes of civil conflicts examined the period between 1960 and 1999. It showed that countries earning around a quarter of their yearly GDP from the export of unprocessed commodities faced a higher likelihood of civil war as opposed to countries with more diversified economies. Without exports of primary commodities such as gemstones or coffee, “Ordinary countries are pretty safe from internal conflict, while when such exports are substantial, the society is highly dangerous.” According to this analysis, rebel groups “loot” primary commodities to stay financially viable, allowing them to pay large number of young and poorly educated soldiers, thus motivating them to stay within the rebel movement.¹¹²

The DRC provided a prime example of this new type of economically motivated African war. None of the fighting parties had any interest in a rapid resolution of the conflict since financial motivations or internal politics discouraged it. For example, Rwandan forces occupied regions of North and South Kivu in which the rich volcanic soils produce three harvests a year, and beneath which lie diamonds and gold. This occupation also allowed Rwanda to expand its influence and create a new frontier along Lake Kivu. The economic essence of these occupations was further illustrated in the frictions between the allied Ugandan and Rwandan forces. During the war, the Ugandan army harbored traders in illegal diamonds and other minerals, leading to the eruption of fighting among supposed allies, as was the case in the Kisangani conflict. These allies were openly vying for a chance to plunder the region’s natural resources.

Leading regional expert Mats Berdal in his book *Greed and Grievance: The Economic Agenda in Civil Wars* acknowledges the presence of economic motivations behind the prolongation of the Congo conflict. Berdal demonstrates through extensive empirical research that during the war, neighboring countries such as Uganda and Rwanda had become major exporters of raw commodities—including gold and cobalt—that they did not naturally possess. These resources were looted from the DRC and sold on the world market. The exports of timber, palm oil, coffee, elephant tusks, and precious minerals from some of the DRC's resource-deprived neighbors also spiked during the war.¹¹³ In June 2000, the NGO Global Witness issued an assessment highlighting the strategic control of the diamond-producing areas in the DRC as one of the key driving forces in the conflict. The report noted that the struggle to control them would be a critical obstacle in the path to a lasting negotiated peace settlement.¹¹⁴ Continuing protests against “blood diamonds” forced the South African company De Beers for the first time to issue guarantees that its stones did not originate from rebel-held areas in Africa. At a London sale, it claimed that the diamonds it offered for sale were not helping to fuel the conflicts in Angola and the Congo, although this claim was challenged by human rights activists.¹¹⁵ By May 2000, even the U.S. government was becoming involved in initiatives to curb the powerful and far-reaching impact of the illegitimate diamond trade on African conflicts. Secretary of State Madeline Albright stated, “Any effective approach to the complex issue of ‘conflict diamonds’ must involve a partnership of the legitimate diamond-producing states, diamond consumers, and the diamond industry itself.”¹¹⁶

The illegal exploitation of the DRC's natural resources and its harmful effect on the country's economy at last were gaining international notice. In response to the DRC government's denunciation of Rwanda and Uganda's exploitative practices, Kofi Annan established a committee of five experts to look at the overall economic situation in the DRC in August 2000. Madame Safiatou Ba-N'Daw, the former energy minister of Ivory Coast, presided over the group based in Nairobi.¹¹⁷ After preliminary consultations with Ugandan and Rwandan authorities, the panel met with various participants in the conflict on December 20, 2000. DRC authorities claimed that occupying forces were plundering gold, diamonds, and coltan in the eastern part of the country, and furthermore, that the fighting in Kisangani between Rwandan and Ugandan forces clearly demonstrated the two country's struggle to control the region's mineral resources. DRC officials also told the UN-appointed panel that income drawn from forest exploitation was declining as a result of the war. Many logging companies had ceased operations and saw mills had closed, especially in areas controlled by the government,

because the DRC's timber came primarily from areas controlled by rebel movements.

DRC officials also deplored the massacre of protected species such as gorillas, elephants, and okapis; the decline in tourism; and the damage to the agricultural sector. The pillaging that took place immediately after August 1998—mainly the theft of livestock and stocks of coffee and other agricultural products—was also put on record. The war had brought to a halt most agricultural outreach programs as well as the flow of agricultural products from the eastern to the western part of the country. These factors had led to an increase in the price of food products in the main cities and the decline in food production and commercial crops throughout the DRC. Government officials reported that malnutrition, food shortages, and hunger had been reported in many places where there had been previously an abundance of food. The panel also made known the exploitation of other resources. The DRC's minister of energy showed a chart illustrating the impact of several electricity plants having fallen into the hands of rebel groups. He drew the panel's attention to the use of Congolese hydroelectric power by Rwanda without any financial compensation. The Zimbabwean government had signed an agreement to legitimately use hydropower supplied by the DRC (although at a highly advantageous rate), but the other countries had not.

DRC officials promised to supply documents proving that Rwanda and Uganda could not have financed their involvement in the DRC without the active exploitation of the country's natural resources. President Museveni himself responded to earlier allegations along these lines in late May 2000, stating that "Uganda entered the DRC for security reasons and not to exploit its natural resources. The exploitation of minerals is a business that required enormous investments, which Uganda does not have."¹¹⁸ If the government had such investment resources, he claimed, it would use them to exploit Uganda's own mineral wealth rather than trying to exploit that of the DRC. Later in the fall of 2000, Museveni noted that the booming trade along the border between Uganda and Congo was due to commerce between private Ugandan and Congolese citizens. He also stated that Uganda's involvement in the DRC had impoverished Uganda, and that his country's economy would not be in such a mess had Uganda not been exploiting Congolese resources. He said specific instructions had been issued forbidding soldiers from involving themselves in the exploitation of natural resources.¹¹⁹

The Rwandan representative stated to the panel that Rwandan forces were in the DRC "solely for security reasons," and that the soldiers who had involved themselves in exploitation had been punished. He also noted that critics within Rwanda itself were accusing the government of spending too much money on the war effort in the DRC, and that yet the army was consuming only 3.4 percent of the country's GDP.

The RCD-Goma representative told the panel that the rebel group “has been falsely accused and it is not engaged in the selling of natural resources of the DRC. Any extraction of natural resources that is taking place is purely artisanal, as the financial means to conduct industrial exploitation are simply not available.” The group’s leadership recognized that exploitation was taking place but explained that it was within the framework of normal trade relations. Finally, Wamba, representing the RCD-ML, told the panel, “The DRC government is not working for the people. Resources throughout the DRC are being used for purposes other than development. There had always been illegal activities in the DRC, including exploitation of natural resources by nationals and foreigners. With the collapse of the state it is difficult to distinguish between official and unofficial networks of exploitation and that without a state apparatus in place, illegal activities would continue.”¹²⁰

FOOD AND HEALTH CRISES IN GOVERNMENT-HELD AREAS

As the economic crisis deepened on both sides of the ceasefire line, reports surfaced in July 2000 that Kinshasa, a city of 5 million people, was on the verge of social disintegration. The economic situation was desperate, the infrastructure was insufficient to address the city’s needs, and the percentage of the population forced into desperate conditions was increasing dramatically. Two-thirds of the population was unemployed, fuel was rare, and the cost of transportation and basic goods was skyrocketing. Robbery and other crimes motivated by economic need were on the rise. Many members of the security forces had not been paid for months. All these factors increased the risk of the collapse of social order, resulting in looting, riots, and attacks by organized bands.¹²¹ Most worrisome were the food shortages. As far back as October 1999, many Kinshasa residents begun adopting survival strategies such as reducing the number of their daily meals, increasing their dependence on cassava, and even engaging in agricultural production in and around the city. Nonetheless, rates of malnutrition among children and death rates among adults were surging at that time.¹²²

Of Kinshasa’s 6 million inhabitants, over 400,000 were said to be suffering from malnutrition, and mortality rates were soaring from the lack of health care. In response, MSF opened emergency feeding centers in the city for 3,000 children in January 2000.¹²³ A new survey published on February 14, 2000 by AAH examined malnutrition rates in four of the twenty-two communes of Kinshasa. The percentage of the population suffering from moderate, acute, and severe rates were revealed to be as follows: 7.9 percent in Selembao, 8.7 percent in Kimbaseke, 4.7 percent in Kingabwa, and 3.5 percent in Kinshasa. In addition, the report

forecast that as many as 13,600 children were at risk of becoming malnourished within the next few years if the situation was not improved.

Kinshasa was not alone in this regard. Severe food shortages were widespread in several parts of the western DRC. The NGO Medical Emergency Relief International (MERLIN) conducted a nutrition survey of Luozi and Mangembo of the far west Bas-Congo province in November 1999 that highlighted the prevalence of both acute and chronic malnutrition among children less than five years old. The majority of these children suffered from kwashiorkor, a severe form of malnutrition characterized by edema, skin ulcers, and thinning hair. The survey explained that a major factor in the decline of the food supply was the influx of refugees. Traditionally, the Bas-Congo population exported its surplus to the rest of the country in exchange for sugar, salt, meat, and fish. The closure of the border stopped this trade. Popular local belief purported that witchcraft was the cause of malnutrition. Malnourished children tend to be hidden away and treated with traditional interventions such as local herbs and massage, which meant that supplementary and therapeutic feeding centers may not have been the most effective means of reaching the families most in need.

In reaction to this mounting economic and food crisis, on November 8, 2000, the DRC government requested that the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN send a mission to assess the food situation in Kinshasa, Bandundu, and throughout Bas-Congo, the province that supplied a significant proportion of food for the city. The FAO estimated food deficit in 2000 at 1 million tons compared to 954,000 tons in 1999. Food aid was provided to the most vulnerable groups such as children and the displaced. Coping mechanisms such as eating less food, having fewer meals, and growing vegetables in household compounds had been stretched to the limit by the late fall of 2000; 70 percent of the population, which was estimated at between 6 to 7 million, could not afford US\$1 a day for food. Chronic malnutrition affected 18 percent of children in the inner city and over 30 percent in the outskirts where war-displaced people had been settling. The FAO report noted that one of the main factors constraining food supplies to Kinshasa was the extreme neglect of the road infrastructure, particularly the Kinshasa-Matadi and Kinshasa-Kikwit roads. In addition, police and military harassment of shippers, traders, and farmers from Equateur and eastern provinces further constricted the flow. Aside from the fighting itself, the shortage of foreign exchange and the overvalued official exchange rate made fuel scarce and expensive, pushing many business transactions into parallel markets. The FAO viewed increased assistance to provincial authorities and local communities for road maintenance as essential for mitigating the crisis.¹²⁴ Tremendous water problems in Kinshasa and its surroundings also were exacerbating the situation. On November 1, 2000, the

Congolese agricultural minister commenced a campaign aimed at rehabilitating the water supply for Kinshasa, Bas-Congo, Bandundu, Pweto, Kasenga, and Kasaji.¹²⁵

The food crisis was becoming severe in government-held Kasai Occidental as well. The city of Kabinda faced a growing malnutrition problem in September 1999. After seven months of fighting over this strategic city, 3,000 children were treated for malnutrition. About 15,000 residents of surrounding villages who had fled fighting to take refuge in Kabinda were also among those worst-hit by the food shortages.¹²⁶ Kabinda had been surrounded by rebels for a year and a half, making it difficult for the WFP to deliver food on a regular basis. Consequently inhabitants were cut off from markets and other sources of food, pushing malnutrition rates to alarmingly high levels.¹²⁷ In October 1999, it was reported that along the ceasefire line hundreds of thousand of civilians were facing starvation and that medical stocks were very low. "Hundreds of thousand of Congolese are currently caught up in a scourging daily struggle to remain alive along a vast ceasefire line." The ceasefire line was the front between rival forces stretching for more than 2,000 kilometers (about 1,250 miles) from the northern to the southeastern DRC. UN evaluation missions found "astonishingly high rates of malnutrition where they had been able to work." By late spring 2000, as the socioeconomic situation deteriorated, the food deficit became chronic in Kananga in Kasai Oriental, excepting local crops of manioc and peanuts.

In Katanga, one NGO noted significant food scarcity in October 1999. It reported that families were surviving on less than a third of their normal caloric intake, and that thousands could starve if seeds were not distributed by January 2000. As of December 1999, families were reduced to foraging in the woods for food.¹²⁸ An AAH nutritional survey conducted in January 2000 in Lubumbashi revealed high rates of malnutrition. Previously better off segments of the Congolese society such as civil servants and students were becoming increasingly vulnerable. The malnutrition problem in Katanga was complicated in mid-2000 by a cholera outbreak in the district of Lubumbashi, Pweto, and Shaba. UNICEF provided cholera treatment supplies to help treat patients and prevent a full-scale epidemic.¹²⁹ By September 21, 2000, more than 136 people had died of cholera in the region, while twenty-one others had succumbed to meningitis between July and August.

THE FOOD AND HEALTH CRISIS IN REBEL-HELD AREAS

Through much of the conflict, the nutritional situation was also dire in the part of Kasai Oriental held by the rebels. A report issued on October 10, 1999 noted that hundreds of thousands of Congolese were caught in

a daily struggle to survive along the vast ceasefire line on the rebel side of Katanga. In areas such as Moba, Kalemie, and Nyunzu, severe economic depression, acute malnutrition, and depletion of food supplies in towns near the ceasefire line were reported. Local markets had stopped functioning and most of the people who did not flee lost their possessions as well as their means of livelihood. No venue existed to sell the small amount of agricultural products still being grown despite rocketing prices.¹³⁰

The situation was not much different in South Kivu. On September 10, 1999, a group of UN agencies and NGOs sent an alert to the international community warning of severe malnutrition in the region. It estimated that 250,000 people were at immediate risk of life-threatening levels of malnutrition, ominously stating, “Famine is knocking at the door.” Drought and the erosion of already poor soil had been exacerbated by the ongoing war, which had caused the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. The alert added, “If assistance is not received soon, the misery affecting the province could spiral into a very serious humanitarian catastrophe.” The alert requested 1,500 metric tons of food ready for distribution to local people, as well as 1,600 tons of seed to allow families to plant for the upcoming major agricultural season.¹³¹ A sample nutritional screening conducted by two international NGOs in Baraka revealed astonishingly high rates of acute and chronic malnutrition. A humanitarian official said, “We are embarrassed to continue to send these mission, because they create expectation among badly hit population that somebody is finally coming to their rescue. With the current crisis, it is not the case.”¹³²

In Province Orientale, one of the most strategically critical places was the city of Kisangani due to the tensions between the Rwandans and Ugandans. As Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers started to withdraw from the city on September 9, 1999, prices of goods increased significantly, driving the already high malnutrition rate even higher. By mid-2000, supplementary and therapeutic feeding centers in the city assisted some 1,700 malnourished children under five. To help with the food crisis, the WFP delivered 1.5 tons of food on June 12, 2000. The food—mainly beans, maize meal, and high-protein biscuits—was flown from Goma and distributed through the hospitals.¹³³ By August 17, 2000, the situation had become desperate in Kisangani; the city was surviving on charity.

A considerable number of corpses remained unburied for three to four days as fighting raged in September 1999. This posed a serious threat of contamination of soil and water sources. A health official stated, “The intermittent water supply and inadequately treated water provided for the city’s population are additional factors augmenting the epidemiological risk within this cholera-prone city.” Agencies recommended that

efforts should be made to improve environmental health in Kisangani, including widespread disinfecting.¹³⁴ The WHO and other organizations implemented emergency activities to assist the population of Kisangani. Given the breakdown of the water and sanitation systems, the number of diarrhea cases was increasing, which could set the stage for a cholera outbreak. The WHO sent seven kits for cholera: five for treatment and two for diagnosis. Malnutrition increases vulnerability to communicable diseases and related mortality (especially due to measles, diarrheal diseases, and malaria). In Kisangani, numerous infectious diseases were already identified as major concerns: cholera, malaria, hemorrhagic fever, yellow fever, and cerebro-spinal meningitis.¹³⁵

From the late spring of 1999 through 2000 yet another troubling aspect of the food and health crisis in the rest of Province Orientale emerged with the outbreak of the deadly Marburg virus. On September 15, 1999, blood and tissue samples were taken from patients suspected of suffering from the hemorrhagic fever in the far northeastern gold-mining town of Durba and flown to nearby Uganda to be forwarded by the WHO for testing in labs in South Africa and the United States. Suspected cases in Durba had initially been reported at the end of May 1999. The samples were collected from nine suspected cases identified between the end July and August, of whom four had died.¹³⁶ During the second week of November 1999, two new suspected cases of hemorrhagic fever were reported. Both victims—one in Durba and the other in nearby Watsa—died. These cases appeared to be not related to the summer outbreak that ultimately killed 60 people.¹³⁷ On February 11, 2000, sporadic suspected cases of Marburg fever continued to be reported in Durba, with one new case confirmed by tests performed by South Africa's National Institute of Virology. The patient was a thirty-year-old miner working in a mine in the Durba area.¹³⁸ As terrifying as the symptoms of the Marburg virus were, the consequences of HIV were much more significant over the course of the conflict in the DRC. Approximately 160,000 Congolese workers were dying of AIDS between 1998 and 2000 in the eastern DRC. A total of 1,617,000 AIDS cases were registered nationwide in 1999. The growth in displaced population increased the number of AIDS cases, expanding the chances of infection.¹³⁹

According to the UN, in the DRC 14 million out of 48 million were suffering from malnutrition by May 2000. Children were particularly hard hit by the war-induced phenomena.¹⁴⁰ In the late spring of 2000, the International Rescue Committee conducted a survey in the eastern DRC. The estimated population living in eastern provinces was nearly 20,000,000. The IRC calculated that over 2,300,000 people died between August 1998 and May 2000. The vast majority was due to the war-related collapse of the region's health infrastructure as well as health and nutrition services. By May 9, 2000, most health services did not have

any drugs left. Maternal and child health services were grossly inadequate. Vaccination programs had ceased, health facilities had mostly been looted or destroyed by warring groups. This breakdown allowed common illnesses such as malaria, diarrheal diseases, and respiratory infections to run rampant and kill massive numbers of people. The tragedy was that these deaths could have been prevented if medical assistance had been available.¹⁴¹ The IRC found that since August 1998 there had been at least 1.7 million deaths in war-affected areas, “over and above the 600,000 that would normally be expected.” On average, the report estimated, “some 2,600 people are dying every day in this war.” It stressed that an overwhelming majority of these additional deaths were due to preventable diseases and malnutrition. “The loss of life in Congo has been staggering,” said the IRC president, Reynold Levy. “It is like the entire population of Houston was wiped off the face of the earth in a matter of month.” He called for securing peace and financing humanitarian aid “at much higher level” to stem the tide of death.¹⁴²

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PART III

From Kabila to Kabila

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Kabila: A Prisoner of Himself

WHO KILLED LAURENT-DÉSIRÉ KABILA?

According to a UN report, gunfire was heard around Laurent Kabila's residence on January 16, 2001 in the Binza suburb of Kinshasa. A helicopter was circling overhead and Kinshasa's residents were hurrying home. Unusually heavy traffic jams snarled the city's major avenues. Rumors of a coup attempt against Kabila began circulating and were fed by lack of any reliable information about his fate.¹ In Goma, the RCD spokesperson confirmed that a coup had been staged by officers of the Congolese armed forces (FAC). Western diplomats in Rwanda seemed to have even clearer information, announcing that Kabila had been shot in a coup attempt and may have been wounded or killed during an exchange of fire near the presidential residence. As rumors of Kabila's death circulated, Interior Minister Gaetan Kakudji vehemently denied it, stating that the president himself had ordered that a curfew be imposed on Kinshasa. In Kinshasa, the situation was confused and grave enough for U.S. and British citizens in the DRC to be ordered to remain indoors. The gravity of the situation was further conveyed when Kabila's aide Eddy Kapend made the following appeal on television: "To the army Chief of Staff, to commander of ground, air and naval forces and all regional military commanders: I order you to take charge of your units." He continued, "Until further notice, no guns shall be fired for whatever reason."² Kapend appealed for calm and announced that airports and borders had been closed but said nothing about the shooting.

A day later, the *New York Times* confirmed that Kabila had been killed by one of his bodyguards. Another report claimed the killing involved a dispute between Kabila and his generals. The Belgian state broadcast network RTBF reported from Kinshasa that Kabila had indeed been shot in the back and leg by one of his own security guards and had been transported by helicopter to a hospital in Kinshasa. The Belgian foreign minister, Louis Michel, confirmed that "two trustworthy sources" told him that Kabila had died. He told RTBF that Kabila's death was not

a coup d'état, but rather "an argument that descended into violence." U.S. officials said they believed that Kabila had been assassinated and urged combatants in the central African country's civil war not to interfere. There was no indication of who was in charge. The French Foreign Affairs Office declared that they had been in contact with the Belgian government and still did not have definitive information about Kabila's death. Back in Kinshasa, uncertainty reigned. Residents stayed at home, leaving the streets deserted in the early morning after a quiet night spent under military curfew.³

As of January 17, the DRC government had "not officially confirmed [Kabila's death]."⁴ Contradictory information from Kinshasa about Kabila's fate continued to spread. According to the official announcement by Minister of Information Dominique Sakombi Inongo on national radio, Kabila had been wounded during an assassination attempt against him and had been sent to a foreign country by plane for care; his claim contradicted statements made by the Belgian and British governments that the president had died during or soon after the attack. He also announced the reopening of the airport and a reduced curfew. Taxis and buses started running again and people returned to work all across Kinshasa, but ferry services between Kinshasa and Brazzaville remained closed. The government reopened the main airport, but most carriers stayed away because of instability. On one of the few planes that flew in and out of Kinshasa, many European and Lebanese women and children could be seen leaving the capital. Even as the government denied for two days that Kabila had been killed, the residents of Kinshasa heard otherwise from Radio France, the BBC, and Voice of America.

The Zimbabwean State news agency, Ziana, reported that the Zimbabwean defense minister, Moven Mahachi, had said that Kabila had died earlier on January 16 on his way to Zimbabwe. Mahachi later said that he had been quoted out of context but did not withdraw the comments. A Congolese DC-8 jet was reported to have landed at Harare International Airport on the morning of January 17, and journalists in the capital spent the day trying to locate the Congolese leader. Because of confusing reports on Kabila's fate, a spokesperson for the Belgian Foreign Ministry, Koen Vervaeke, warned against "contradictory" information circulating about the situation in Kinshasa. He reaffirmed that "two reliable independent sources" said that Kabila had died after being shot. The DRC minister of defense, Godefroid Tsham'lesso, said in Tripoli that President Kabila had died after being shot by the head of his presidential guard. Tsham'lesso explained, "He was said to have fought death for about two hours before he expired."⁵ Yet on January 18, 2001, the official word from the government remained that Kabila had been shot and wounded. Senior officials from Belgium, the United States, Britain, and France continued to insist that the president had died while being flown

to Zimbabwe for medical treatment. His death was also confirmed by officials from Congo's military allies Angola and Zimbabwe as well as by Kabila's U.S.-based spokesman, John Aycoth.⁶

Speculation arose that Kabila's son Joseph was also killed in the January 16 incident, or that he had fled the country. Almost immediately a Congolese government spokesman confirmed that Joseph Kabila was alive and well.⁷ Across the DRC outside of Kinshasa, the general attitude was one of "watching and waiting." All provinces were reported calm but in a state of alert.⁸ The RCD-Goma in its strongholds of Goma, Bukavu, and Uvira had its eyes turned toward Kinshasa but with its ears turned toward Kigali. Reports noted that the general population in the two Kivus were "disappointed" about the news of Kabila's reported death. There was a general feeling of failure, because "People had been thinking up to now that Kabila would win the war by force and save them from the aggressors." The Rwandan-backed RCD was very unpopular in the Kivus, where the people felt oppressed and under "foreign rule." The events in Kinshasa had "completely dashed the hopes" of many local people.

Further south in Lubumbashi, the situation was less certain, because residents of the city said many young people were being "arbitrarily arrested" and the prisons were "full." It was feared that violence would break out if there was an official announcement of Kabila's death.⁹ This official announcement finally came on January 18, 2001, when Minsiter of Information Sakombi Inongo announced on national television that "The DRC is in mourning and the government of National Salvation has the deep pain and unhappy task of announcing the death of President Laurent-Désiré Kabila today, Thursday, January 18 at 10:00 AM." Sakombi called for the population to stay calm. He said the whole country would observe thirty days of mourning, that Monday and Tuesday of the following week would be public holidays, that flags would fly at half-mast, and that state radio and television broadcasts would be modified as a sign of respect for the late leader. Sakombi did not clarify the circumstances of Kabila's shooting, saying only that the president had been a victim of an "attack." But the emerging media consensus was that Kabila had been hit by several bullets after a row erupted between him and several of his generals over their handling of the protracted war. Sakombi also said that the late leader had left a testament ordering the armed forces, police, and security forces to maintain discipline and to remain peaceful and calm, to protect the population and to "kick out the aggressors out of the national territory."

The declaration ended two days of confusion created by Western and African reports that Kabila was dead while the Kinshasa government officially denied it. Two days after the declaration, the DRC ambassador to Harare, Kikaya Bin Karubi, stated that the following Saturday Kabila's

body was to be flown back from Zimbabwe, where he was taken for medical treatment. State television gave no details about Kabila's funeral. But the government of Belgium said his body would be flown first to Lubumbashi and then to Kinshasa and that his funeral was planned for Tuesday, January 23. The passing of Kabila, an African strongman who had become a pariah on the international stage, thrust the mineral-rich country into a new uncertainty after three and a half years of brutal civil war and four decades of Mobutu's predatory rule.

Civil society groups in Kinshasa, while regretting the way Kabila died, nevertheless condemned "politicians who obstruct democratization." Paul Nsapu of the umbrella group *Conseil Régional des ONG de Développement* (CRONGD) told the IRIN news agency that people were "fed up with those methods of taking power and of hanging on to power. Rather than being relieved by the removal of Kabila, civil society groups remain anxious. Many of our colleagues are still in prison." After the official announcement, the Zimbabwean defense minister, Moven Mahachi, said that his country would continue lending military support to the new government to be led by Kabila's son, Joseph: "We will help them to preserve their peace as much as we can. We are also hoping that the rebel stop their fighting and actually come to negotiate with the government."¹⁰ Zimbabwe also called on regional powers not to abandon the faltering Congo peace process. Mugabe said, "Events in the Congo should not lead anyone reneging on the Lusaka agreement." He called for a meeting of leaders of Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Angola to review the situation. The Namibian government said its 2,000 troops would remain deployed in the DRC despite the assassination.

Kabila's opponents in the conflict—Rwanda, Uganda, and the three rebel movements—reacted to the official announcement by insisting on speedier application of the Lusaka peace agreement. A Rwandan official said it was "too early to decide what to do." But the Rwandan presidential adviser, Colonel Charles Kayonga, stated, "If Kabila is dead, his successor must abide by the Lusaka accord." Ugandan officials spoke of the implementation of the Lusaka accord and condemned assassination as a means of changing government. The Ugandan foreign minister, James Wapakhabulo, declared, "We hope his death may help pave the way for a more positive development. It is our hope that whoever replaces Kabila will not be as intransigent as he has been." Jean-Pierre Bemba also called for agreement on the implementation of the Lusaka accord. The RCD-Goma spokesman said the group did not support murder as a means of gaining power: "Consequently, the RCD does not recognize the coup leader now in power in the DRC," according to the RCD-Goma spokesperson Jean-Pierre Lola Kisanga, who also stressed that the Lusaka accord was the only way forward.

When some twenty-four African leaders gathered on January 19 in the Cameroonian capital of Yaounde for the opening of a Franco-African summit, they stood together to pay tribute to Kabila by observing a minute of silence. The Togolese president, Gnassingbe Eyadema, invited them to do so “in memory of our brother Laurent Kabila.” At the summit’s opening ceremony, the French president, Jacques Chirac, stated that France condemned violence, seizures of power, violations of borders, and other acts of war that had become so prevalent in the region. Initially the meeting had been planned to focus on issues of globalization, but the leaders shifted their focus to concentrate mostly on the DRC and worked toward issuing a declaration on the situation during a closed session.¹¹ The broader international community also began to respond. On January 19, members of the OAU conflict resolution committee called an emergency meeting to respond to the killing of Laurent Kabila. Top delegates from Algeria, Equatorial Guinea, Chad, Senegal, Swaziland, Burundi, and Togo also condemned the killing of Kabila.¹² A statement from dialogue facilitator Ketumile Masire’s office expressed regret over the assassination and illustrated the need to “start a new chapter in the politics of the Congo.”¹³ On January 29, 2001, the Belgium prime minister, Guy Verhofstadt, and his foreign minister, Louis Michel, were to meet with Kofi Annan in Stockholm to discuss the situation in the DRC and the Great Lakes region. They were to brief the UN leader on Michel’s tour of the seven African states involved in the armed conflict during the previous week.¹⁴

On Thursday, January 25, 2001, General Joseph Kabila, who was preparing to be inaugurated as the new president the following day, told the UN envoy, Kamel Morjane, that he was prepared to “work closely” with the UN operation in his country in order to achieve peace. The meeting in Kinshasa between Joseph Kabila and Morjane was their second since Laurent Kabila’s death. During the meeting Joseph Kabila expressed readiness to participate in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and restore democracy but noted that this would not be possible as long as foreign troops occupied parts of the DRC.¹⁵ On January 26, 2001, the Belgian foreign minister, Louis Michel, who had been on a tour of the countries that had signed the Lusaka agreement, warned that the situation in the DRC following the assassination posed not only “huge risks” but also an “opportunity.” The purpose of his tour was to revive the stagnant peace process and also obtain guarantees for the security of some 2,600 Belgians in the DRC. In his view, the risks were urban violence, military clashes, and new tensions between Kabila’s allies.

On January 31, 2001, the EU special envoy, Aldo Ajello, said that Kabila’s death could be used to speed up the peace process; “We know that every crisis, even the tragic killing of a president, always has an element of opportunity, and we are trying to explore this element of

opportunity.”¹⁶ The UN Security Council condemned the killing and called for national reconciliation in the DRC, backing Kofi Annan’s call to the parties to work for peace.¹⁷ The U.S. ambassador to the UN, Richard Holbrooke, warned Uganda and Rwanda not to take advantage of the situation to make territorial gains, the United States holding the presidency of the Security Council at the time.

Reports on the events leading to Kabila’s death remained murky. From the beginning, reports about the circumstances of the shooting conflicted. What was not debated was the violence that erupted on the afternoon of January 16 around the presidential palace, prompting fear of a coup attempt. Kabila was meeting with his senior generals at the time to discuss a reorganization of the military command structure. According to Belgian radio, one of his bodyguards, a soldier from the Kivus, pulled a gun on him during a discussion focusing on the situation in the Katanga province, where government forces had suffered the most devastating defeats. Several Congolese radio reports claimed that Kabila died on the night of Tuesday, January 16, after being rushed to the hospital.¹⁸ A Belgian radio report declared that the shooting around Kabila’s palace originated with clashes between soldiers backing Deputy Defense Minister Colonel Dieudonné Kayembe—who Kabila had just fired—and units loyal to Kabila. Other senior military officers aside from Kayembe had also been sacked for their handling of the conflict in the DRC, possibly making them sympathetic to Kayembe. The RTBF explained that Kabila apparently gave an order to his son Joseph, the army chief of staff, to arrest Kayembe, and Kayembe reacted by pulling out his firearm and shooting the elder Kabila. Joseph Kabila and several others in the room at Kabila’s official residence were believed to have been wounded.¹⁹

Kabila’s effort to reshuffle his commanders following the loss of ground in the southern front in the Katanga province, as well as disagreements over tactics, may have triggered the shooting. These events may have generated a spontaneous rather than preplanned coup. But the private American intelligence agency known as Stratfor contradicted this view in its report by noting that Kinshasa had remained calm throughout and that the armed forces were neither fighting among themselves nor looting; these signs appeared to indicate that the incident had been premeditated and that the situation was firmly under control. But other analysts saw little evidence of a planned coup d’état, suggesting that some of the internal contradictions in the system came to the fore around the attempted reshuffling of the military command. In addition, the Stratfor report noted that despite the story of the disgruntled army commander as the cause of the shooting, it was more likely that “the country’s ongoing war and the damage it has done to the economy is the real culprit.” Territorial gains made by Rwandan and RCD forces in southeast Katanga

threatened this vital mining sector, a threat that was a potential factor in the sudden change of events.

The weekly journal *The East African* claimed that Kabila had been “fine-tuning a major purge of top army officers,” which was to have been announced on that fatal Tuesday. The reporter for this periodical also alleged that the reshuffle was apparently prompted by recent defeats suffered by the DRC army and its allies in Katanga and further claimed that the bodyguard who supposedly killed Kabila was named “Rashid,” and that he possibly hailed from the eastern DRC and was among those shot and killed in the incident. Adding to the confusion, a group called the *Conseil National de la Résistance pour la Démocratie* (CNRD) claimed responsibility for killing Kabila. In a statement sent to AFP, a CNRD spokesman said, “We totally support the heroic act of our brother-in-arms, Rachidi, who sacrificed his life to kill Kabila, the bloodthirsty monster.” The CNRD was a former component of the ADFL, the Kabila-led alliance against Mobutu. The faction was led by General André Kisase Ngandu, who had fallen out with Kabila before ADFL forces arrived in Kinshasa, who then disappeared under mysterious circumstances. The CNRD statement further claimed that on January 15 “Forty-seven young patriots were executed without trial in the presence of Kabila,” which was “the straw that broke the camel’s back.”

World Vision International reported on January 24 that Laurent Kabila had been minutes away from announcing a purge of top army officers—including some of his own relatives—for having mishandled the war against the rebels. The suspicion was that the plans were leaked and the officials used a member of the president’s own security detail to murder him so as to preserve their positions. In the official version of events, Sakombi Inongo said that Kabila was shot three times by one of his bodyguards as he was meeting government officials; Inongo, however, denied reports that the president was discussing a reorganization of the military high command. He also maintained that Kabila was pronounced “clinically dead” in Zimbabwe the Thursday after the shooting rather than dying from his wounds in Kinshasa on the day of the shooting. He refrained from giving a detailed explanation of the events since an official investigation was underway.²⁰

On January 18, 2001, Tcham’lesso accused Rwanda and Uganda of involvement in the assassination. A Rwandan official flatly denied this, saying, “We are learning what is happening in Kinshasa from the radio stations.” A spokesman for the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), the ruling party, added that his country would not take advantage of the void in Kinshasa, but if the DRC and its allies tried to attack Rwanda, “They will discover that we are on our guard.” Uganda also denied any involvement in the assassination and reiterated that its troops were in the DRC to protect Uganda’s borders, and Kabila’s death would not change that

situation. By contrast, there were signs that the government's allies—Zimbabwe and particularly Angola—were growing weary of Kabila's refusal to implement the Lusaka accord. Kabila had long been considered the main obstacle to any diplomatic resolution to the conflict and had become increasingly isolated in his four years in office. After months of stalemate, the warring parties seemed satisfied with carving up Congo and feasting on its natural resources. Rwanda and Uganda were exploiting minerals and timber in the east, while Zimbabwe and Namibia were doing the same in the central and southern provinces.

Having not held the promised election in April 1999, Kabila steadily lost popularity in Kinshasa. He ruled even more harshly than Mobutu, ignored the opposition, and clamped down on perceived troublemakers, thus increasingly creating adversaries at home. He traveled only at night because during the day, pedestrians would lift their shirts to show their bellies at his passing motorcade as a sign that they were hungry. Kabila had made no effort to end the war that had displaced 2 million people within the country and pushed 250,000 into neighboring countries. In fact, he appeared to do whatever might disrupt diplomatic progress. He showed little interest in negotiation but was adept at finding military allies, sometimes even the unlikeliest ones. Kabila ignored the contents of the peace accord that was signed eighteen months before. At every turn, he blocked the UN from beginning the process of deploying troops. The UN had 500 civilian and military officials in the DRC despite the fact that 5,000 peacekeepers had been authorized. They had not been able to work or be deployed because of Kabila. According to the Lusaka agreement, Kabila was supposed to meet with the other Congolese factions but he failed to show even the slightest interest. He even closed down the office of Ketumile Masire. After months of inactivity, with the peace accord still in effect only on paper, Kabila turned again to a military solution in October 2000. His troops began an initially successful attack on Rwandan-held territories in southeastern Congo but were eventually pushed back and ended up with a net loss.²¹ Kabila and his allies suffered their most significant defeat since the accord was signed when Rwandan and RCD-Goma forces overran the town of Pweto in Katanga. This resounding defeat and the accompanying loss of military muscle may have been the final straw for Kabila's foreign backers.

Colette Braeckman, a Belgian journalist specializing in Central Africa, offered the following assessment of Laurent Kabila: he was a man whose political instincts and out-of-date ideology contributed to an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion that marked his three and a half years in power. "Kabila was a prisoner of himself, of his ideology formed in the 1960s. His guerrilla-fighter inclinations inspired in him an instinctive distrust toward all that he did not understand or control." After snatching power from Mobutu, Kabila went on to squander an international and local

reservoir of goodwill. Within months, he had alienated Western powers and former African allies alike and triggered the effective partition of the Congo.²² The case of the Angolan government illustrates the growing frustration with Laurent Kabila that had been building before his assassination. It had shown an increasing impatience with Kabila's hesitance to apply the tenets of the Lusaka accord.²³ Angola's deployment in the DRC was aimed at blocking the traditional supply routes in the Congo used by the Angolan rebel group UNITA. Apart from providing aircraft and military equipment, oil-rich Angola had also contributed to the cost of Zimbabwe's and Namibia's deployments. But the Angolans had become disillusioned with Kabila, in part because of his apparent failure to prevent UNITA from trafficking diamonds in the DRC. These frustrations led Angolan officials to begin a public rapprochement in September 2000 in Angola with one of Kabila's chief enemies: Uganda. In November, General João de Matos, the commander of Angolan Armed Forces (FAA), announced in Kinshasa that the Angolan military presence in the DRC had become merely symbolic.

Another factor pushing the Angolans away from Kabila was that the FAC was losing an increasing number of battles against the rebels, creating a drag on Angolan financial resources with nothing in return. Since Kabila's economic policies—to put it mildly—were not working at all, Angolans had begun to feel that Kabila would not be able to hold out much longer against his challengers. One theory behind the assassination was that nervous Angolan leaders feared that the next president might not be easy to manipulate or even work with and thus decided to take control of the situation themselves. One commentator claimed that Angolan officials had given the DRC government chief of staff, Eddy Kapend, “the green light” to mount the coup, with the Rwandan and Ugandan governments also having been informed. By January 25, 2001, reports conveyed a myriad conspiracy theories. The government's official position remained that a lone bodyguard shot Kabila, although it was in the process of conducting an investigation. It was obvious to all that the various fighting factions had reasons to get rid of Kabila.

For its part, Zimbabwe has been a key ally to the DRC government and rallied regional support against the “invasion” of Rwandan and Ugandan forces supporting the rebels. Under a military cooperation agreement, Zimbabwe committed 11,000 to 12,000 troops out of a 40,000-strong army to the war. The conflict was deeply unpopular domestically and became a stumbling block to a desperately needed deal with the IMF. Zimbabwean government officials had claimed that business opportunities within the DRC would offset the expenditure, but the returns did not materialize. Making clear his reservations over the cost of the war effort, Finance Minister Simba Makoni said that the previous year Zimbabwe had spent over \$200 million in the DRC that it could ill

afford. Independent analysts stated that the real figure was more likely around \$300 million. A senior spokesman representing the Zimbabwean private sector stated that the nation's companies were seeing little return on their investments in the DRC, making the military presence less justifiable: "We have been pushing the government to withdraw from the DRC. We've committed a lot of resources to the DRC and received nothing back."

Zimbabwe's business deals involved the purchase of cheap power from the DRC, the importation of a small quantity of copper condensate, and diamond-mining ventures conducted by the Zimbabwe military. However, according to Tsinge Dube, the head of the state-owned company Zimbabwean Defense Industries, even the mining ventures had required far more initial investments than was originally envisaged.

According to security sources in Harare, the government had been trying to disengage from the DRC since some point in 2000. Claude Kabemba of the South African Institute of Policy Studies observed, "Mugabe has been unable to get out because of Kabila's reluctance to go ahead and implement the Lusaka accords. And he could not afford to get out and leave Kabila vulnerable to be overthrown." Other analysts argued that Kabila's death would not necessarily lead to a quick peace, because Kabila was simply a figurehead who would not have come to power had it not been for the assistance of Rwanda and Uganda and would not have stayed in power without help from Angola and Zimbabwe. Many said Angola—a key military backer of Kabila—would simply replace Kabila with someone more willing to do their bidding, perpetuating the conflict and the misery of the country's 50 million people. One commentator stated that Kabila would frequently disagree with his foreign backers on military issues, but that the next president was likely to be one who would meet with the approval of Angola: "What we are likely to see is a regime that is even less independent than he was, and that is not in the interest of the Congolese people."

FROM KABILA TO KABILA

As rumors of a coup attempt began spreading in Kinshasa on January 16, there was no real sense of who was in charge. Appearing on TV, Gaetan Kakudji denied that Kabila had been killed and said that the president himself had ordered the curfew on Kinshasa. Nonetheless, Kakudji's statement was challenged on January 17, 2001 by the Belga News Agency, which declared that the head of the Joint Military Command, Colonel Eddy Kapend, had taken the reigns of power in Kinshasa at least temporarily. In fact, the armed forces appeared to have had the situation under control. But confusion emerged with the formal appointment of Joseph Kabila as interim head of state. On January 17,

insisting that Laurent Kabila was still alive but receiving medical treatment, the presidential spokesman, Sakombi Inongo, said that Kabila's son, Major-General Joseph Kabila, would head a provisional government in his father's absence. However, earlier reports said that Joseph Kabila had also been injured or killed during the attack on his father. The fact that he made no statement on Congolese radio or television after it was announced that he had assumed power fueled speculations that he too was dead or had left the country.²⁴

So how was Joseph Kabila chosen? Justice Minister Mwenze Kongolo attested that the top political and military advisers sat down to agree upon a new leader. He added that Joseph "was the best man and was accepted by all sides." At the time of his appointment, he did seem to fit the needs of all diverse groups, including the military, government leaders, and the Angolans alike. He was not as much of a hardliner as his father and was thought to be more apt to bring an end to the fighting. Although Joseph Kabila was not especially eager to move toward peace, outside observers thought he could be manipulated to do so by those—such as the Angolans—who favored a quick end to the conflict.²⁵ Little was known about him other than that he received his military training in China after his father seized power in 1997. Called back to his country after the outbreak of the war in August 1998, Joseph Kabila was quickly given the rank of major-general. He was said to have been born in the eastern Congo, near the border with Rwanda and Uganda. At the time of his birth, his father had been a guerrilla fighter in a small resistance group for three decades. In Kinshasa people were unhappy about the son's ascension to power, not only because of its monarchical tinge but also for a more sinister reason: Joseph's mother was said to be a Tutsi. The Tutsi ethnic group, which held power in Burundi and Rwanda, was hated by most people in the DRC. Joseph's Tutsi connection was vehemently denied by the government. In any case, after the ADFL victory, Joseph had served for a short time as deputy chief of staff to James Kabarebe, a Rwandan who had been put in charge of the Congolese army. It was reported that the two shared a barracks and would occasionally dine together at the Pili Pili Restaurant in downtown Kinshasa. Kabarebe would later become the deputy chief of staff in Rwanda. The government had to fight off these persistent rumors as well.²⁶

Filip Reyntjens, a Belgian expert on African law at the University of Antwerp, commented that Joseph Kabila's appointment by the cabinet to lead the army and the government allowed the "inner circle" to retain control. Because there were no constitutional rules to guide the process, a lot of jockeying for position was taking place among those who had been very close to the late president. Reyntjens said, "The long hesitation is reminiscent of the former Soviet Union in that there was never an obvious heir, so it takes time [for the elite] to decide who should get the job."

Even in appointing Joseph Kabila to the interim leadership of the government and army, the cabinet did not yet appoint him the permanent president or head of state, Reyntjens said. In the arrangements behind the scenes, Kapend had not been considered since he was regarded as not having personal political ambitions. But regional analysts did identify Interior Minister Gaetan Kakudji as a likely candidate to eventually take control. His influence had grown under Kabila the father and was considered to be the regime's "number two" man. He was the one who called for an extraordinary cabinet meeting that led to Joseph Kabila's appointment as interim head of state. Economic Minister Victor Mpoyo was also identified as a contender, as was the controversial former foreign affairs minister Yerodia Abdoulaye Ndombasi. It was also possible that Léonard She Okitundu, the then foreign affairs minister, might become prime minister. According to Reyntjens, any successor from among this group would have probably provided some continuity. But there was a danger that Kabila's death would have weakened the DRC regime, making it even less coherent than before. Concerns about continuity may have led the cabinet to choose Joseph Kabila, who by this point had become a respected member of the Joint Military Committee.²⁷

By January 18, state television began showing images portraying Joseph Kabila as having already taken control. It showed him receiving ambassadors from Belgium, France, Britain, China, and Russia as well as a U.S. embassy representative. Richard Boucher, the U.S. State Department spokesperson, announced that the United States would be working with the new Congolese head of state to bring about peace but declined to say whether Washington was pleased by the leadership succession. In Brussels, Abert Mpeti, a spokesman for the combined political opposition in the DRC, said that the appointment of the younger Kabila was a "negative signal. We are afraid that the situation in the country will become catastrophic due to the large number of arms circulating there."²⁸ In Kinshasa the appointment increased tensions, which was reflected on the streets. One Kinshasa resident, Moise Muamba, said, "This is a government we have, it is not a monarchy." Students also demonstrated against the appointment. Observers noted that the thirty-year-old Kabila did not speak the languages of Kinshasa, namely French and Lingala, having lived most of his life in English- and Swahili-speaking East Africa.

On January 22, 2001, Laurent Kabila's body was flown back to the DRC from Zimbabwe. The authorities appealed for calm during the period leading up to and during the funeral, warning that the government would "make use of all of its available forces." Tension in the city was mounting as Kabila's body lay in state at the People's Palace in the central district. Before the funeral, thousands of people were lining up to pay their respects. The following day, Joseph Kabila, who now headed

the nation, descended into the vault to lay a single flower on his father's coffin after a twenty-one-gun salute and a fly-by by a squadron of fighter jets. The heads of state of Angola, Malawi, Namibia, Sudan, Zambia, and Zimbabwe and senior representatives of other nations also left flowers in the mausoleum outside the historic Palace of the Nation that had once been topped by a statue of King Leopold II.

The burial was preceded by an interdenominational funeral service at the People's Palace. There, General Kabila, dressed in a black suit but without a tie, bowed before the coffin. Troops of the government's allies helped lock down Kinshasa, patrolling alongside DRC troops and police. On that same day, the cabinet, dominated by ministers from Katanga, announced that Angola was sending reinforcements to secure Kinshasa and Lubumbashi and that at least two battalions had arrived, while a detachment of Zimbabwean troops had firm control of the Kinshasa airport, having positioned tanks and heavy artillery there.

News agencies reported a growing anti-Western sentiment in Kinshasa, with many grief-stricken residents accusing the West of masterminding the assassination. Diplomats were subjected to incidents of stone-throwing and sticks being hurled at diplomatic vehicles traveling to and from the funeral ceremony. Diplomats were accused of being "assassins" and "diamond thieves."²⁹ Meanwhile, inhabitants of the eastern town of Bukavu in the South Kivu province were mourning Kabila "to everyone's surprise." Markets, shops, businesses, and schools were closed and very few vehicles were on the roads. The governing RCD-Goma—which has been trying to topple Kabila—did not intervene, although there were a few military patrols on the streets. But the RCD warned residents in rebel-held territory not to organize any demonstrations to commemorate Kabila's funeral.³⁰

On Friday, January 26, 2001, Joseph Kabila was sworn in as the new president of the DRC in Kinshasa. In a brief ceremony broadcast live on television, Kabila swore loyalty to the nation and guaranteed to honor "the independence, the unity, and cohesion of Congolese people, and the integrity of the national territory." The inauguration was twice postponed after initially being planned for Wednesday, and then for Thursday, apparently to allow the late president's parliament to approve his son's succession, and then again to allow time for the drafting of an oath of office.³¹ Addressing the nation directly for the first time, Kabila expressed his readiness to participate in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue as per the Lusaka peace agreement and affirmed his will to restore democracy in the DRC. But he added that this could not happen as long as foreign troops occupied part of his country and thus vowed to restore the country's territorial integrity and retake the rebel-held areas. Furthermore, he said that there had been "moments of mutual misunderstanding with the Clinton administration. The DRC intends to normalize bilateral relations

with the new administration, based on mutual respect and the desire for progress of our two peoples.” Kabila said in his inaugural address that he would play an even more active role in the SADC, from which he expected “unconditional moral and economic support.” He raised hopes in announcing that he would seek to resuscitate the Lusaka accord. Many had blamed the failure of this agreement on the intransigence of Laurent Kabila. Joseph Kabila hoped that “The UN Security Council will honor its commitments by deploying its forces speedily” and pledged to cooperate fully with the MONUC.

A week before the national address, on January 19, Kabila had told the military high command that the army was one and indivisible. He urged commanders to forge ahead toward his father’s goal, “Namely to reconquer all the occupied territories of the country and guarantee the territorial integrity of the DRC. The objective will be attained through discipline, cohesion, and unity of the FAC, which has been called upon to transcend regional, tribal, and ethnic divisions.”

Joseph Kabila had many tasks before him; the major one clearly was to try to unify a nation so divided that one needed a passport to travel from the western to the eastern side. Bringing peace to the Congo or even appeasing all the fighting factions was no doubt going to be a herculean task. But many observers saw it as the only likely way that Kabila could stay in power, as well as the reason he was named head of state. It was not immediately certain how he would tackle Congo’s problems, in particular the crippling war. Kabila’s father had said that the war had been swallowing up 80 percent of the resources of the DRC, plunging a country with immense mineral wealth into its worst ever recession. In the capital, the crisis had driven people to the point of despair, and the fear of food riots was palpable. Statistics from the DRC’s central bank held that economic growth had fallen by 11.3 percent in 2000 after a fall of 10.3 percent in 1999. By contrast, the rate of inflation skyrocketed to 520 percent by December 2000, turning many families in the capital into beggars.³² Furthermore, the entire country seemed to have fallen even more tightly into the grip of the country’s power brokers: key figures from the political establishments of Congo’s neighbors and the hard-line inner circle that had surrounded the late president and now advised his son. To prevent the continuation of the status quo, young Kabila needed to assert his authority over his handlers and negotiate with the rebels.

As power shifted uncertainly, most assumed that the influence of foreign powers in Kinshasa would grow. The Angolan president, Dos Santos, was widely regarded as the real power holder there. The Angolans were the protectors of the new regimes and made their presence visible everywhere. They were waiting to see whether Joseph Kabila would govern in their interests, and if he did not, his days would be numbered.³³ A thirty-day period of national mourning for the late president ended on Sunday,

February 19, with a special religious service in Kinshasa. Joseph Kabila attended one of the services with other government officials.³⁴

Among this frenzy of activity, Joseph Kabila issued a presidential decree on February 8 opening an official inquiry into his father's assassination. The inquiry commission was composed of state officials and representatives of SADC. The commission's mandate was to establish objectively the circumstances that led to Laurent Kabila's assassination and then find the guilty and their accomplices. The commission was authorized to interview suspects in and out of the DRC and given broad powers to help it accomplish its mission. Members of the commission were to have access to all the documents, archives, and buildings linked to the murder. This decree also allowed the commission to create its own procedures and to report in thirty days.³⁵ Unfortunately it did not release its report on the mandated day of March 7. State Prosecutor Luhonge Kabinda Ngoy announced, "We have not finished yet and we don't know when we will finish."³⁶

Finally, on May 24, the commission released its report on the assassination. The report named the assassin as a bodyguard, Rashidi Mizele, but said that he was part of a wider coup attempt. The inquiry gave few details but did accuse the Rwandans of masterminding the assassination. When announcing the report's findings, Attorney General Luhonge Kabinda Ngoy said, "Rwanda and the RCD-Goma worked together in the assassination of the head of state." He added, "Their special service and other representatives were present in Kinshasa and certain neighboring countries. This was part of a plot for a coup d'état." The Ugandans and Rwandans denied these allegations, with one official responding as follows: "They are fabricating and concocting everything to smear the image of their enemies, so let them produce proof of the allegations."³⁷ Furthermore, the spokesman argued that those responsible were trying to deflect blame in an effort to scuttle the Inter-Congolese Dialogue: "The assassins of Kabila are still in office in Kinshasa and the head of state [Joseph Kabila] who was head of the military in Kinshasa must know more." Officers appointed by Joseph Kabila had been in charge of his father's security.

The RCD urged the international community to dismiss the government report and called for an independent international committee of inquiry to investigate the assassination. The media watchdog organization *Journalistes en Danger* (JED) issued a statement complaining that the governmental commission's official report revealed little, especially regarding key questions about who benefited from Kabila's death. The report was frustratingly ambiguous concerning even very basic pieces of information, such as the date and place of President Kabila's death. It did state that Kabila had been severely wounded by three shots but then claimed that he died two days after the shooting. The JED statement

further noted, “The commission hides behind the principle of presumption of innocence to explain why it does not mention the names of the persons and countries implicated in Kabila’s death. At the same time, it makes no such attempt to hide the names of Bizima Karaha, Adolphe Onosumba, and Joseph Mudumbi—all of whom are members of the RCD-Goma.” After the report was issued, about 1,000 people had been arrested, including Eddy Kapend, Kabila’s aide-de-camp, but the report made no mention of these detainees.

In addition to dealing with the difficult issues surrounding his father’s assassination, Joseph Kabila also had to focus on matters of governance. On February 22, he made public his cabinet choices, surprising many by retaining much of his father’s cabinet. Many analysts and diplomats had expected to see changes reflecting the new impetus toward peace. Among those who most observers thought would be removed included Justice Minister Mwenze Kongolo; Interior Minister Gaetan Kakudji; National Education Minister Yerodia A. Ndombasi; and Economy, Industry, and Trade Minister Pierre Victor Mpoyo. Some political insiders said that Mwenze, Kakudji, and Yerodia led rival factions fighting for influence within the government. One editorial questioned whether Kabila was really the harbinger of change as claimed by some: “The young president has taken a while to orchestrate changes internally, thereby giving the hawks and other family members the opportunity to put all kinds of pressure on him. As a result, some fear that the younger Kabila does not really represent much hope for the country.”³⁸

This pessimism quickly subsided on April 6 when Joseph Kabila sacked his entire cabinet. According to the official statement, “The ministers would continue to perform their day-to-day functions on a limited scale until a new cabinet is appointed.”³⁹ Ten days later, the list of Kabila’s new government was made public, and it contained several significant changes. Mwenze Kongolo was no more the justice minister, instead he was made the minister of national security and public order. The most powerful members in the previous administration such as Gaetan Kakudji and Pierre Victor Mpoyo were no longer occupying any post. Kabila retained only four of the twenty-five members of his late father’s cabinet, thereby greatly asserting his own political power. The new lineup also reflected a DRC leadership that was oriented more toward Zimbabwean influence than Angolan.⁴⁰ Interior Minister Kakudji, who had been sidelined entirely, was especially close to the Angolan government; the only person Kabila retained who remained close to Angola was Security Minister Mwenze Kongolo.⁴¹

As we shall see below, Kabila visited many foreign countries during his first few months in office. But on June 10, he undertook his first visit into the country’s interior. Kabila first traveled immediately to the east of Kinshasa to the Bandundu province, where he visited the towns

of Kikwit, Kenge, and Inongo. He also toured through Bas-Congo and the two Kasai provinces. He presented this trip as a “listening tour of the country coinciding with the implementation of economic measures, which are both nurturing and strict.”

JOSEPH KABILA’S REVIVAL OF THE LUSAKA AGREEMENT

Kabila also engaged in a massive diplomatic offensive with his European and African counterparts.⁴² Four days after taking office, he met with the South African president, Thabo Mbeki, who flew into Kinshasa after attending the world economic forum in Davos, Switzerland. Mbeki expressed his optimism about getting the Lusaka peace process back on track and said he hoped for an agreement within the next week on the convening of a regional summit on the DRC: “Everybody wants to move the process forward as quickly as possible, and I’m quite sure that in a period of perhaps the next seven days, everybody will have agreed as to where and when to meet.” Mbeki was especially pleased with his first meeting with the new DRC president. He felt Kabila had shown enough commitment to the peace process to have all the parties move forward with the implementation of the Lusaka accord and for Bemba’s MLC rebel group to consider signing the Kampala disengagement plan that had been discussed just before Laurent Kabila’s death. South Africa was still unwilling to condemn Uganda and Rwanda as aggressors as Kabila desired but accepted that foreign troops should be withdrawn from the DRC.⁴³

Kabila then flew to Washington at the end of January, attended a congressional prayer breakfast, and talked with the new administration. This trip followed a clear signal of support from President George W. Bush, who had sent Kabila a letter just hours after Kabila’s inauguration expressing condolences on the death of his father. Kabila also met with Secretary of State Colin Powell. While in the United States, Kabila also met with his Rwandan counterpart, Paul Kagame, for the first time to discuss efforts to end the multinational conflict. According to a U.S. official, the fact that the two had met on their own without U.S. prodding after being briefly introduced at the breakfast was a positive sign: “It seems to be the beginning of a necessary dialogue for them to reassure each other and understand each other.”⁴⁴ She Okitundu said that Kabila’s overseas diplomatic offensive was an effort to breathe new life into the Lusaka peace process.

In the broader sense, the DRC had become isolated under Laurent Kabila. Now his son—by traveling abroad so soon—was seemingly intent on reconnecting his country to more distant powers. But it was not certain whether the tight circle of hardliners that had surrounded

the new president was interested in peace. Even under Laurent Kabila, the hardliners were said to regard peace and political liberalization as a path to losing their grip on power.⁴⁵ After the Washington visit, Kabila traveled to New York City to meet with Kofi Annan at the UN. On February 2, 2001, speaking to reporters before the meeting, Annan said it was “encouraging” that the new DRC president and Kagame had met in Washington and that they had also met with Colin Powell, stating, “I believe that we have an opportunity to move the peace process forward.” When asked whether the change in Congolese leadership might allow the UN to deploy its peacekeepers, the secretary general said that the matter went beyond the presidency of one country in the region: “It’s not just the new president, it’s also the other governments with their forces on the ground and the militias who are fighting in the Congo.”⁴⁶

After Washington and New York, Kabila traveled to Paris on February 1 and met with the French president, Jacques Chirac. The Congolese leader pledged to unconditionally include representatives of Rwanda and Uganda and the rebels in the national dialogue. Kabila also expressed his willingness to ensure the application of the Lusaka agreement. But he also stressed the necessity of respecting the inviolability of the DRC’s frontiers.⁴⁷ French officials called on Kabila to rapidly carry out his stated intentions to promote the Lusaka peace process involving the country’s neighbors. They welcomed Kabila’s promise to “contribute to the relaunch of the Lusaka process and to continue negotiations with Burundi, and his commitment to facilitate the action of the UN observers.” The French also noted Kabila’s intention “to work toward the democratization of his country and on the strengthening of rule by law.”⁴⁸ Three days later, Kabila traveled to Belgium and met Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt and Foreign Minister Louis Michel. The foreign minister, who had already met the younger Kabila at his father’s funeral in Kinshasa, noted that he felt Joseph Kabila was a conciliatory man who was “someone who is ready to open up the game.”⁴⁹ In the meeting with Kabila in Belgium, Michel pressed Kabila for the release of prisoners, acceptance of a facilitator for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, and the allowance of political parties to resume their activities. Michel had been the first top Western government official to have talks with Kabila since he took over in the wake of his father’s assassination.⁵⁰

In Brussels Kabila also met with Romano Prodi, the EU commission president, to gather support for his peace initiative. Aldo Ajello, the EU special envoy to the Great Lakes, said that Kabila also held talks with Javier Solana, a top EU foreign affairs official. At the time, Ajello, who was himself touring countries involved in the DRC conflict directly or indirectly, stated, “We are ready to give him credit.”⁵¹ Solana said the EU was ready to resume “progressive” aid to the DRC due to the parties’

renewed commitment to the Lusaka agreement.⁵² President Prodi met again with Kabila in Brussels on March 16, 2001, to further discuss the gradual resumption of cooperation and development.⁵³

Also during his initial diplomatic offensive, Kabila traveled to London to meet with Prime Minister Tony Blair and Foreign Minister Robin Cook on March 13, 2001, to talk about reviving the peace process.⁵⁴ Kabila also stressed to the British leaders that he wanted the withdrawal of foreign troops, the deployment of UN peacekeepers, and a conference for regional peace. He still remained vague on key issues of the war. For example, he failed to recognize the formal existence of the Interahamwe or ex-FAR forces. He expressed sympathy for the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) rebels in Burundi and suggested that the Mayi-Mayi were not “negative forces” since the Congolese had every right to arm themselves against Rwandans and Ugandan invaders. As one reporter noted, “It became clear that Kabila had no interest in seeing any of these groups disarmed.” Kabila wants peace but he still “lacks legitimacy and power” and “nobody is sure who in the background might be pulling the strings.” In London, Kabila rejected the UN call for the withdrawal of foreign troops, including DRC allies.⁵⁵ Kabila’s multilateral diplomacy also took him to Sweden on March 16, 2001, as a part of a five-nation European visit to highlight the situation in the DRC. He invited foreign businesses to help develop the country but said he did not expect substantial foreign business interest until after the war. He said the reconstruction of the economy was underway, with the once-spiraling inflation being brought under control, but the war was the biggest obstacle to the country’s progress.⁵⁶

Kabila’s diplomatic effort engaged not only Western powers but also African countries. For example, on February 7, Kabila sent a special envoy to the Angolan president, Dos Santos, to brief him on the results of his recent visits to the United States and Europe. Foreign Minister She Okitundu told reporters that “Since Angola is an ally to the DRC, it is natural that President Kabila wants to keep his Angolan counterpart apprised of these visits. Kabila has met with George Bush, Jacques Chirac, Colin Powell, and Kofi Annan.”⁵⁷ Kabila himself later traveled to Angola on April 26 for a state visit described as contributing to the development of traditional relations between the DRC and Angola.⁵⁸ In the same vein, the then justice minister, Mwenze Kongolo, who also accompanied Kabila on the U.S. and European trips, was dispatched to Zimbabwe on February 8 to inform Robert Mugabe of recent events in the Congo and Kabila’s first trip outside the country. Kongolo explained that Kabila’s trip to the United States and Europe was a success. He also expressed the hope that all the parties involved in the conflict will meet soon to talk about the Lusaka peace process.⁵⁹ Kabila met with his Namibian counterpart, Sam Nujoma, in Kinshasa on February 20.

On March 26, Kabila began a two-day visit to one of the DRC's major military allies, Zimbabwe. He was greeted by Mugabe on his first state visit to an African country. Kabila also met with the CAR president, Ange Patasse, and Denis Sassou Nguesso of the ROC on the sideline at the OAU summit in Libya on March 7. They discussed questions dealing with patrolling borders, refugees, and broader cooperation between the three countries. Kabila intensified his contacts with South Africa, and on April 11 he met with the South African deputy president, Jacob Zuma, in Kinshasa.⁶⁰ On April 13, Kabila also went to Abuja in Nigeria to meet with with President Olusegun Obasanjo to rally support for the Lusaka agreement. During this visit, he stated, "We are now in the phase of troops disengagement, which will be followed the withdrawal."⁶¹

Kabila's African diplomatic offensive picked up again in the late summer of 2001. On August 14, he visited Kenya and held a long meeting with Daniel Arap Moi at the presidential palace in Nairobi. During the talks, the two leaders stressed the necessity of developing and reinforcing links between the two countries, mainly in trade within the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), with a particular emphasis on hydroelectricity and aerial transport. They also spoke of developments in the DRC and the application of the Lusaka peace agreement. Kabila informed the Kenyan president of progress made in the organization of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.⁶² Kabila continued with his diplomatic tour by visiting the Malawian capital of Blantyre on August 17, conducting meetings over two days to discuss the peace process in the DRC.⁶³ The DRC president also visited Mozambique two days after his stay in Malawi.⁶⁴ Kabila then visited Windhoek in Namibia on August 22, where he thanked the Namibian people for the help they provided during the three years of civil war. At the end of August, Kabila visited South Africa to talk with Nelson Mandela. He called for closer ties between South Africa and the Congo and encouraged South African investors to invest in the DRC. While visiting Soweto, he told the community that the end of the war was in sight.⁶⁵

The initiative for reviving the Lusaka protocol was taken up not only by Kabila. On January 30, the OAU made an urgent appeal to member states and the international community to provide support to the peace process.⁶⁶ The OAU secretary general, Salim Ahmed Salim, called on the world community on May 13 to back Kabila's peace efforts: "President Kabila has clearly demonstrated his disposition to work seriously with former Botswana President Ketumile Masire to find a solution to the crisis."⁶⁷ South Africa dispatched Deputy President Jacob Zuma to visit Uganda on February 6 as part of a wider initiative to bring about solutions to the conflict. Zuma met with President Yoweri Museveni and Deputy President Speciosa Kazibwe.⁶⁸ Mandela himself traveled to

Kinshasa on February 13 to meet with Kabila, inviting Kabila to the next round of Burundian peace talks to be held in the northern Tanzanian town of Arusha on February 26 and 27.⁶⁹

An even more significant initiative came from Zambia, which was hosting a regional summit on February 13 to kick-start the stalled DRC peace process. The new DRC president was expected to attend the meeting along with key regional heads of state and rebel leaders so as to “gauge the implementation” of the Lusaka peace agreement. According one official, “Zambia would not be holding the summit if we were not confident that progress could be made.” He added that after “frenetic activities on the diplomatic front,” it was felt that “this was the opportune time for leaders to come together and compare notes.” But the Rwandan president, Paul Kagame, said he would not attend the summit. Kagame accused the Zambian president, Frederick Chiluba, of partiality in his mediation of the Congo peace talks: “I really find it a problem for me to go there and behave as if nothing has happened,” Kagame said. He added, “I cannot go there. If it takes place somewhere else, I will go.” Relations between Kagame and Chiluba had soured in recent months with the Rwandans accusing the Zambians of siding with the Congolese government in the fighting in Pweto, when government troops and allied militias fled into Zambia. The Rwandans claimed that the fleeing soldiers included senior commanders involved in the 1994 Rwandan genocide and asked for their arrest. But the commanders were instead returned to Congo.⁷⁰

The summit’s organizers did not invite a few other would-be peacemakers, including South Africa, Mozambique, and Libya, which in the past had tried to jump-start the peace negotiations. Chiluba said, “This a meeting strictly for signatories to the Lusaka ceasefire agreement. The invitation will not go beyond this.” Despite these problems, the summit began on February 13.⁷¹ Only three presidents of the six combatant nations decided to attend the meeting: Kabila, Nujoma, and Mugabe came to Lusaka. According to Chiluba, the meeting “will open this new avenue to try and recommit ourselves . . . to the peace process.”⁷² Joseph Kabila said that the absence of Paul Kagame at the regional summit did not adversely affect the overall process. He described the meeting as a success. A highlight was Kabila’s affirmation of the former Botswana president Ketumile Masire as mediator, contrary to his father’s stance. A statement from Masire’s office in Lusaka said that Kabila’s acceptance reflected a determination to work for peace in the DRC. Masire accepted to visit Kinshasa. After the Lusaka summit, Chiluba announced that the UN would start deploying military observers in the DRC on February 26. From this point on, much depended on the attitude of the Rwandans who had soldiers in the DRC but did not attend the summit.⁷³

THE ARMED OPPOSITION

Two days before Kabila's death, the MLC and the RCD-ML leadership held talks in Kampala to merge the two groups with the support of the Ugandan government. The Ugandans initiated the establishment of the Front for the Liberation of the Congo (FLC) by proposing a merger of all the Congolese rebel groups under its patronage: the MLC, RCD-ML, and the lesser known RCD-National led by the politician Roger Lumbala. The process was supervised by Lieutenant Colonel Noble Mayombo, chief of Ugandan military intelligence. On January 16, it was announced that the RCD-ML led by Ernest Wamba dia Wamba had refused to sign the document for the planned union with the MLC led by Jean-Pierre Bemba. The RCD-ML spokesperson, Claude Pashi, accused Uganda of imposing the document of union on the two rebel groups.⁷⁴ Pashi said that it was not acceptable for Bemba to become Wamba's deputy. The document creating the FLC appointed Oliver Kamitatu of the MLC to the position of secretary general and made Roger Lumbala of the RCD-National minister of mobilization. The MLC leadership appeared satisfied with the document proposing the alliance; Bemba challenged the idea that Uganda was trying to impose the union.

On January 29, 2001, the RCD-ML said that Ugandan soldiers "violently" broke into the Bunia home of its leader, Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, after disarming his guards. The RCD-ML statement about the incident also noted that the soldiers were looking for documents and also seized a satellite phone and video recorder. It also claimed that Jacques Depelchin, a close collaborator of Wamba, was "kidnapped at gunpoint" after being kept under house arrest for three weeks. He was reportedly taken to the headquarters where Ugandan army commander Colonel Edison Muzoora held him incommunicado for nearly seven hours before shipping him to Kampala, where he remained under "city arrest" and soon thereafter commenced a hunger strike to protest his detention.⁷⁵ Practices of intimidation and coercion began against RCD-ML members by the MLC with the support of Uganda.

On June 1, the RCD-ML called for the immediate and unconditional release of its officials who were being detained under "inhumane conditions in Bunia and Beni." A statement from the group blamed the arrests on the MLC and the FLC mines minister, John Tibasima Ateenyi, who was said to have acted "under the instructions of MLC leader Jean-Pierre Bemba." Tibasima was formerly a part of the RCD-ML but had had a falling out with Wamba. Following the merger, Wamba left the region to live in exile in Tanzania, but he nonetheless continued to see himself as the head of the RCD-ML. On June 11 he called for a revision of the FLC constitution, saying that it does not function. He stated, "At the time of unification, we continued to notice harassment against those who have

different views than those of the front.” Wamba was referring in particular to the arrests of twenty-one of his partisans.⁷⁶ He complained that the Congolese partners were not allowed to discuss the merger among themselves. However, the merger soon appeared to be failing due to its rejection by the local RCD-ML cadres for what they perceived as MLC dominance in their region.

On August 17, 2001, Uganda-backed rebel leaders met in Kampala to try ending all factional disputes. They finally reached a compromise deal to share the territory. The RCD-ML spokesman, Suddin Bin, explained that the compromise did “not mean that the FLC has come to an end. It will remain in place, but to neutralize the situation, both Bemba and Mbusa are to control areas that belonged to the MLC and RCD-Kisangani before the merger.”⁷⁷ The meeting between Bemba and Mbusa was mediated by Museveni himself. Under the deal, Bemba was to return to Gbadolite and would be in control of areas such as Buta, Zongo, Imese, Bumba, Libenge, Lisala, Gemena, and Banalya. Mbusa declared himself in charge of the area stretching from Isiro to Butembo and was now recognized as head of the RCD-ML. Under the deal, he was to control large areas of the eastern North Kivu province such as Bafwasende, Isiro, Butembo, and Beni. He was also to be in charge of Bunia. Wamba, who was also expected to attend the Kampala meeting, did not show up.⁷⁸ Probably under heavy pressure from Museveni, Wamba finally signed the agreement to set up the FLC on August 18. This happened eight months after other rebel groups had signed it in Kampala. According to a senior RCD-ML official, Wamba signed the merger agreement two days before the preparatory committee meeting for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.⁷⁹

One promising development in the spring of 2001 was that despite all of the tensions between their proxy rebel groups, Uganda and Rwanda attempted to work out their differences. On March 20, 2001, the Ugandan president, Museveni, was set to meet his Rwandan counterpart, Paul Kagame, with the aim of improving relations between the two countries. The meeting came in the wake of Uganda’s March 6 declaration that Rwanda was a hostile country, ranking it alongside traditional enemies such as Sudan and the DRC. Rwanda and Uganda’s relations fell out during the previous year after a series of clashes in the northeastern city of Kisangani. The Ugandans had maintained that the Rwandans had endangered Ugandan national security by deploying troops on the border between the two states. Rwanda accused Uganda of hosting and training anti-Rwandan elements.⁸⁰ On July 6, 2001, Kagame and Museveni pledged to improve their soured relations after meeting near the border between their two countries. The two presidents agreed to establish a close working relationship in hopes of harmonizing their positions on matters of mutual interest, especially with regard to consolidating peace

in the region.⁸¹ Although the DRC continued to be plagued by political repression under the younger Kabila's new regime, fighting between rival rebel factions, domination by occupying armies of other nations, and rampant economic exploitation, the change in leadership at least seemed to loosen up the stalemate that had gripped the Lusaka peace process while the elder Kabila was alive. Whether or not all parties involved would take advantage of this new opportunity remained to be seen.

Upheaval in Joseph Kabila's Congo

PEACEMAKING: THE HARARE DISENGAGEMENT PLAN AND THE REBEL FORCES

Joseph Kabila was ready to get the Lusaka peace process started again. In so doing, he encouraged the implementation of the Harare disengagement plan that had been signed in December 2000. The plan emphasized the observation of a ceasefire, the pushing back of troops 15 kilometers (9 miles) away from the front lines, the deployment of a peacekeeping force, the withdrawal of foreign troops, and the disarmament and demobilization of the militias. The overall prospect looked promising soon after the younger Kabila took power. Two weeks after his father's assassination, there were no ceasefire violations by the belligerents.¹ Shortly after the meeting with Kabila in New York on February 2, Kofi Annan released a statement saying, "Once a ceasefire has been definitively established, the parties can proceed in carrying out the disengagement of forces they agreed to in Harare on December 6, 2000."² Annan explained that the concept of the UN mission in the DRC had to be modified in light of the experience gained in the fifteen months since the initial phase of deployment commenced.

Although an observer mission was still needed to monitor and verify whether the movements of the parties were in compliance with the Harare disengagement and deployment plan, Annan felt that the MONUC should have a reduced number of military personnel and less equipment. He stated, "The objective of the plan is to concentrate the parties forces away from the current line of confrontation." If the Security Council approved the new concept, a total of some 550 military observers would be deployed in the country in the near future.³ The new concept stressed the presence of the MONUC in four sectors: Mbandaka, Kisangani, Kananga, and Kalemie. Military observers would be deployed from those centers to monitor the disengagement of armed forces. The role of the

armed personnel would be limited exclusively to guarding UN facilities, supplies, and equipment. It was thought that the primary threat to the international presence in the DRC came not from hostile action but from pilfering and vandalism. The MONUC was not expected to deploy to protect the civilian population or extract military observers from difficulty. The number would not exceed 2,000 for the entire country. In addition, two riverine units of some 400 men would be deployed in view of the importance attached to the country's system of waterways.⁴

A team of UN inspectors arrived in Kinshasa on February 12 to evaluate preparations for the deployment of the UN observer mission in the DRC. Led by the Australian general Tim Ford, the military adviser for UN peacekeeping operations, the visitors held talks with DRC authorities. The UN inspectors also visited government-controlled Mbandaka and rebel-held Kisangani. Ford also went to the CAR, where the MONUC had set up a logistical base.⁵ The DRC was divided by a line of confrontation between the forces of the five foreign armies, stretching from Lake Mweru on the Zambian border to the banks of the Ubangui River. According to the Harare plan, the troops were to begin withdrawing from their advance positions and step back from the line of confrontation. A meeting to discuss the date for the disengagement and redeployment exercises to begin was set up. When the troops started to draw back, they would be supervised and monitored closely by UN military observers. The implementation date had to be chosen with care: not too late to lose the momentum, but not before all necessary preparations could be put in place to ensure an efficient and transparent operation. Without waiting for this date, Paul Kagame of Rwanda confirmed to Annan on February 19 in a phone conversation his decision to withdraw his troops from Pweto. He stated that he was ready to pull back all of his forces 200 kilometers, which was in accord with the Harare disengagement and redeployment plan.

When March 15 was chosen by the Security Council as the day to begin the full implementation of the disengagement plan, Kagame's withdrawal of troops from Pweto was already underway.⁶ On February 23, a UN team left Kinshasa for the town of Pweto to prepare for the deployment of UN observers who would monitor the disengagement of Rwandan troops.⁷ In late February, two MONUC teams composed of four individuals arrived in Bukavu and Uvira after the RCD agreed to the deployment of UN forces. They were the first UN observers to deploy in the South Kivu. They also traveled by plane to Goma and then on to Pweto, where they were due to start work early on February 25. On February 28, the pullback of Rwandan forces began with a team of only five UN observers in attendance. About 3,000 Rwandan troops withdrew from Pweto, which was one of the biggest withdrawals since the beginning of the conflict in 1998.

The withdrawal of all forces to 15 kilometers from the front lines was to be supervised by the UN observers deployed at thirty-nine sites across the DRC. The United States urged all parties to the Lusaka protocol to commence immediate withdrawal of their forces to the agreed-upon positions and to complete the process within fourteen days as specified in the disengagement plan.⁸ A rebel spokesman said, "We hope for a simultaneous disengagement. We're waiting the fourteen days, until March 29, to judge."⁹ In Kasai Oriental, the disengagement of Rwandan forces from thirty-one villages in the Kabinda region was confirmed on March 27 and most of the troops had withdrawn to a position at least 200 kilometers away as outlined in the Kampala agreement of April 2000. The government-held town of Kabinda also experienced this disengagement process. War had come to Kabinda toward the end of 1999 when Rwandans appeared on the hillside that overlooks the town. FAC and Zimbabwean troops dug foxholes and requisitioned any buildings that could provide shelter from Rwandan mortars. For eighteen months the town's inhabitants, swelled by thousands of displaced people who had fled the Rwandan advance, became prisoners on the front line of the war. But then on March 15, Rwandan troops began to peel away from their hilltop positions in compliance with the disengagement plan signed in 2000.¹⁰

Yet Pweto remained under RCD control and a potential powder keg. The DRC foreign minister, Leonard She Okitundu, warned that the Kinshasa government would consider military action against the RCD in Pweto, Katanga, and other southeastern regions of the country. Okitundu said the rebel occupation of Pweto was in violation of the military disengagement plan. But Rwandan officials warned that they would respond if the DRC government tried to take advantage by moving into the territory they had vacated. The RCD insisted that as a Congolese body, it had the right to stay in Pweto.¹¹ Meanwhile, in Province Orientale, the RCD occupied the formerly abandoned localities of Bosoko, Lokutu, Yangambi, and several other sites along the Congo River, thereby blatantly violating the withdrawal plan. According to the DRC government, "These facts also prove that Rwandans and Ugandans clearly intend to resume their aggression in order to stay in the DRC and cause the partition of our country." However, the RCD did withdraw from the towns of Rutuku, Mulembwe, Musipi, and Mpala in Katanga. Civilians in the eastern DRC were skeptical about the withdrawal of Rwandan troops 200 kilometers from the front lines. A local interviewed by a reporter stated, "Rwandans are so smart that those of us from the north and the Kivus know that they have hidden intentions. Under the cover of a withdrawal they will come to our region to kill villagers under the pretext of looking for Interahamwe."¹² Following the end of the disengagement process on March 29, the MONUC verified

the withdrawal of Rwandan forces and RCD-Goma rebels from Pweto. The MONUC also reported substantial Rwandan and RCD withdrawal from the Kabinda area. The Burundian government, which was not a signatory to the Lusaka ceasefire agreement or the Harare disengagement plan, also announced the withdrawal of three Burundian battalions in the east as well.¹³

Also in March 2001, the MONUC set its sights on negotiations for the disengagement of the Ugandan army and the deployment of observers in Province Orientale. The areas in question were Bunia and Lubutu, and especially Buta, where an entire Ugandan battalion was stationed. By March 21, 690 Ugandan soldiers had left Buta for the town of Beni near the Ugandan border. But the Ugandan army had left "some vehicles and guards for the vehicles." By mid-June, Uganda had also pulled out its troops from the northwestern town of Basankusu. The Ugandans had also just announced on July 10 that about 700 soldiers from Bafwasende would begin walking 400 kilometers to Beni on the following day.¹⁴ But Major General Jeje Odongo noted that some 2,000 Ugandan soldiers would remain in the DRC after its sixty-five battalions were withdrawn from Bafwasende the following week.¹⁵

The disengagement of the MLC troops was much more problematic. MLC rebels began by blocking the deployment of UN observers in the northwest. General Mountaga Diallo, commander of UN forces in the Congo, stated, "Our observers have delayed their deployment due to the fact that Jean-Pierre Bemba has not left as planned." The FLC (ex-MLC) was the only organization not to have begun a withdrawal of its forces in line with the December Harare agreement. According to an anonymous UN source in Mbandaka, a team of MONUC observers arrived at the rebel-held position and were prevented from moving by FLC forces, who said they had not received any instructions from Bemba. The same sources said that the problem seemed to be linked to "tactical maneuvering between the rebels and Kinshasa."¹⁶ The MLC rebels then attacked the first UN helicopter to cross the CAR/DRC border. In the Equateur Province, constant violations of the ceasefire followed.

As Diallo and Morjane intensified their dialogue with the parties to prevent an escalation of the situation and ensure the success of the disengagement exercises, an announcement came on March 21 that the MLC had promised to pull back its fighters. Unfortunately, the promise came with two sets of conditions: first, Bemba asked the MONUC "to deploy and protect the local population" in areas from which it was withdrawing; and second, he linked the "disengagement to the start of Inter-Congolese talks." This prompted the ambassadors of UN Security Council to hold "frank" talks with Bemba centered on the disengagement of troops from the front lines. The ambassadors of France, the

United States, Russia, and Great Britain expressed “concern” over the effect of this decision on the peace process and its likelihood of provoking a renewal of military action.¹⁷ Pressure also came from the Joint Political Committee (JPC), which in its tenth session in early April invited the MLC to “unconditionally respect its commitments to the Harare sub-plan signed voluntarily.”¹⁸ On April 7, 2001, Bemba agreed to withdraw his forces from the front lines on the northwest border.

Kamel Morjane confirmed on May 3 that the MLC had agreed to start the disengagement of its troops and allow the UN to deploy. But Bemba did not keep his promise, forcing criticism from the Joint Military Commission (JMC). The Zambian presidential affairs minister and the JMC member Eric Silwamba lamented that “The MLC remains the only party that appears not to have complied with the Kampala and the Harare subplans.” Another MLC commitment to pull out from the front lines came on May 23, paving the way for the deployment of UN observers. Olivier Kamitatu of the MLC said that his group would abide by the stalled peace plan and withdraw its troops by June 1. He added, “The UN has assured us they will provide humanitarian assistance to our people by Monday [May 28].”¹⁹ Bemba himself said, “We have agreed to withdraw. We will begin the withdrawal process when the UN brings humanitarian aid to people of the region.”²⁰ On June 1, the MLC at last began pulling back from the front lines.

Unfortunately the MLC withdrawal stalled yet again on July 6. MONUC officials stated that the MLC had not fulfilled its commitment to withdraw its forces to agreed-upon positions by June 1.²¹ Annan even urged Museveni to persuade the MLC to pull back from the front lines as required by the agreement.²² The ministers of the SADC issued a communiqué on July 20 condemning the MLC’s failure to abide by the agreement. In particular, they rejected as “illegal and unacceptable an attempt by the MLC to leave behind so-called police units in areas which should revert to government control.”²³ Finally, on August 3, MLC troops completed their redeployment in Equateur. But as one observer noted, the MLC “has not relinquished administrative control of the areas its military forces are vacating, effectively preventing government forces from moving forward to their designated positions at Losombo, Abunakombo, and Djefera.”

Another complicated issue was the demilitarization of Kisangani. On May 4, the UN mission urged Rwanda and Uganda to withdraw their forces from Kisangani. The government of the DRC also urged the UN Security Council to act against the two countries for failing to withdraw troops to the line agreed upon in the peace agreement. The government “notes with alarm...the reinforcement of Rwandan military positions around the city of Kisangani.”²⁴ Finally, on July 15, MONUC observers said that Ugandan and Rwandan troops had pulled back 60 miles from

the city as per the peace accord. But the RCD-Goma did not pull out of Kisangani. The RCD's refusal to disengage from Kisangani was due to the issue of the administration of the city. The MONUC agreed on June 13 to allow RCD rebels to continue to run the city. The UN under secretary general for peacekeeping operations, Jean-Marie Guehenno, said "a precipitous withdrawal" by the RCD-Goma could "contribute to major civil unrest in the city." Guehenno added that the MONUC "is very much aware of the political, military, and symbolic importance of Kisangani to the RCD."²⁵ The decision was hailed by the RCD-Goma. Chief of Foreign Affairs Joseph Mudumbi of the RCD declared, "We are happy that the Security Council recognized that Kisangani needs our presence."²⁶

Despite this arrangement, by mid-July the RCD-Goma still had failed to pull its troops out from Kisangani, thus obstructing MONUC operations. The UN called on all forces to withdraw to the agreed-upon positions as a matter of urgency, and to make this happen, Kamel Morjane held talks with rebel officials in Goma. The rebels told him that RCD wanted to "clarify its relationship" with the UN mission in Kisangani."²⁷ The RCD spokesman, Kin Key Mulumba, added that the RCD "has never rejected the principle of demilitarizing Kisangani, but we have always made known our concerns in our capacity as Congolese. We are still studying with the Security Council the modality of this demilitarization, which will take into account the security of Kisangani and its population."²⁸ Intense international pressure mounted on the RCD to demilitarize the city. Noting on July 20 that it "is still not demilitarized as envisaged in UN resolutions," the SADC ministers condemned the "transfer of the headquarter of the RCD from Goma to Kisangani" as a "serious violation of UN Resolutions 1304 and 1355." Relations became more strained between RCD administrators and MONUC officials in Kisangani. The rebels expressed their dissatisfaction with the MONUC's work, accusing the UN of exceeding its mandate in trying to demilitarize the town. To make matters worse, the RCD announced that it intended to strengthen its military presence in Kisangani.²⁹ But overall, this pull-out of rebel forces and their backers' troops was well received abroad and at home.

PEACEMAKING: THE HARARE DISENGAGEMENT PLAN AND GOVERNMENT FORCES AND ALLIES

The FAC and its SADC allies demonstrated a tremendous reluctance to reciprocate Uganda and Rwanda's disengagement moves. MONUC field officials indicated on March 26 that the Congolese army and its allies had made no moves toward disengagement. However, MONUC officials in Kinshasa stated, "Belligerents are disengaging

and everyone is moving,” creating a false impression that all was going according to plan. Joseph Kabila made clear that he would ask troops from Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia to leave only once the opposing armies of Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi had completely withdrawn, noting, “I can’t say I am 100 percent satisfied, because the country is still under occupation.” Addressing a group of legislators from Zimbabwe’s ruling party on March 27, Kabila said that the withdrawal of Zimbabwean, Angolan, and Namibian troops will take place only when “the objectives that brought them to the Congo have been fulfilled.”³⁰

As the pressure intensified, government forces and their military allies also “started their disengagement” process on March 28. They began to withdraw from positions along the Oubangui River in the Equateur province, and disengagement appeared “to be under way normally” in the town of Ikela northeast of Kinshasa. The SADC forces allied with the DRC government announced on Zimbabwean radio that it would “not rush to pull out of the DRC, as they risk reversing the gains they attained in the three year conflict.” Major-General Edzai Chimonyo, addressing 1,000 Zimbabwean and Congolese soldiers in Kabinda in Kasai Occidental, said that SADC troops would “carefully time” their pullout in order not to give undue advantage to invading and rebel forces.³¹ Nonetheless, observers noted that the pullout was “satisfactory” in Kasai Oriental. In the town of Kabinda, for example, Congolese government soldiers crawled out of their foxholes and also began to withdraw as the residents celebrated.³² Simultaneously to Rwandan forces, the FAC also withdrew from Pweto but reoccupied the towns of Rutuku, Mulembwe, Musipi, and Mpala in Katanga left vacant by the RCD-Goma.

Rival forces were due to complete a pullback from the front lines by midnight March 29, withdrawing 15 kilometers on either side. But forces backing the Kinshasa regime had not moved out of Kananga. The UN commander Mountaga Diallo said, “Something is not right. We hope the disengagement will take place rapidly.” The commander of the Congolese forces in Kananga insisted that he had received no order to withdraw, although the high command told the MONUC that the order had been given. Things soon evolved nonetheless, because on April 2, the MONUC made a statement that pro-government forces had complied with the disengagement agreement.

By July 27, all the belligerents were believed to have withdrawn from the dividing line. The troops had by now pulled back not just from the initial 15 kilometer line, but to the agreed-upon 200 kilometers from the front lines. The major problem facing the peace process administrators was the setting up of an interim administration for those zones in which a vacuum was created by the removal of foreign forces.

DEPLOYING UN PEACEKEEPERS

According to the Harare disengagement plan, the pullout of belligerent forces from the front lines was to be followed by the deployment of UN peacekeepers. Speaking in New York after a meeting with Paul Kagame on February 7, 2001, Annan noted that UN peacekeepers were ready to deploy in Pweto after Rwandan troops evacuated.³³ But this deployment came slowly because the UN was awaiting a clear indication from Joseph Kabila regarding his commitment before it could deploy troops. Kamel Morjane reiterated that the UN forces would be deployed only once all the parties implemented the disengagement subplans as agreed and signed in December in Harare.³⁴ Yet preparation for the deployment of a peacekeeping force moved forward, and on March 7, the UN announced that the deployment of more than 1,500 troops in the DRC was set to begin before the end of the month, coinciding with the end of the disengagement and deployment exercises. UN troops were to include 208 soldiers from Uruguay, 540 from Senegal, 614 from Morocco, and 200 from Tunisia. The Uruguayan soldiers were to be based in Kalemie, the Senegalese in Kananga and Mbandaka, the Moroccans in Kisangani and Goma, and the Tunisians in Kinshasa.³⁵

On March 29, the first contingent of 110 Uruguayan troops arrived in Goma. They flew directly from Montevideo and went straight to Kalemie to take up their mission to monitor troop withdrawals; they also took charge of security at the UN general staff headquarter in Kalemie.³⁶ A day later, a second battalion of 256 Uruguayan UN troops landed in the eastern DRC, where it joined the 110 soldiers already deployed. A total of 434 troops were deployed in the "Uruguay One" force, including 311 army soldiers, 114 naval troops, and nine members of the Uruguayan air force.³⁷ Another group of 170 Uruguayan peacekeepers was dispatched in Mbandaka in early May as part of the riverine unit, which helped reopen the Congo River to navigation after three years of closure.

Senegal also participated in this peacekeeping deployment. A message from the Senegalese president, Abdoulaye Wade, to Joseph Kabila on February 9 expressed Senegal's willingness to contribute a contingent of peacekeepers.³⁸ On March 27, an advanced party of twenty-six Senegalese soldiers arrived in Kinshasa. They were deployed in guard units in the government-held town of Kananga in Kasai Occidental. The force commander of the MONUC general Mountaga Diallo welcomed the first batch of 130 Senegalese troops in Kananga on April 3. The second contingent arrived on April 6, bringing the total to 260.³⁹ Another Senegalese unit of 280 soldiers was deployed in May in the MONUC's Mbandaka headquarters.⁴⁰ South Africa was also interested in sending a peacekeeping force to the DRC. The first members of the South African National Defense Force (SANDF) arrived in Kinshasa on April 4.

An eight-soldier medical team flew from Waterkloof Air Force Base near Pretoria. Besides this medical air evacuation team, the contingent included eight air-cargo-handling teams and two air-crash-and-rescue and fire-fighting teams with their own equipment.⁴¹ With some delays, a total of sixty-nine South African National Defense Force (SANDF) specialists were deployed on May 4 for peacekeeping duties. The SANDF soldiers were to work from Kinshasa.⁴²

A UN Security Council mission led by Jean-David Levitte visited Kinshasa on May 11. It held talks with Kabila and Foreign Minister She Okitundu. The Congolese leader expressed disappointment with the UN peace effort, requesting that the organization send 20,000 peacekeepers to his country. In a public statement, he noted, "The commitment from the UN is not what we really expected. The commitment is lacking in terms of personnel and resources." As of early May, the UN had deployed some 1,300 observers to back the DRC peace process.⁴³ On May 10, 2001, the OAU secretary general, Salim Ahmed Salim, reinforced this sentiment observing that the proposed UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC was inadequate taking into account the size of the country and the number of parties involved. Some 3,000 peacekeepers were to be deployed in the DRC to back up about 500 military observers monitoring the ceasefire signed in 1999. Nonetheless, Kofi Annan on May 11 sounded a note of cautious optimism about the situation in the DRC, hinting at the possible expansion of the UN's role.⁴⁴ Later that summer, on August 3, he announced the appointment of a new special representative to the DRC, Amos Namanga Ngongi of Cameroon. A former deputy director general of WFP, he would begin his new charge at the end of August, hopefully reenergizing the UN presence.⁴⁵

WITHDRAWAL OF FOREIGN TROOPS

The third step in the Harare disengagement plan was the withdrawal of foreign forces from the DRC. In addition to Rwandan and Ugandan forces, this was to include SADC forces composed of Angolan, Namibian, and Zimbabwean troops.⁴⁶ Developments on the ground were not reassuring at the beginning. On January 20, 2001, the new president urged the Congolese armed forces to recapture all areas occupied by enemy forces as ordered by his late father in a bid to guarantee the country's territorial integrity. Kabila told the Congolese high command that they would achieve the mission only "through discipline, cohesion, and aggressiveness."⁴⁷ Three days later, the FAC attacked Rwandan military positions for the first time since the assassination of Laurent Kabila. The DRC government army fired a multiple rocket-launcher at the Rwandans, and Angolan forces reinforced government positions in the area with 2,400 troops stationed at Dubie, a frontline town about thirty

kilometers southwest of Pweto. These moves suggested an attempt to retake the strategic town.⁴⁸

A more hopeful sign came from Ugandan officials, who on February 21 announced that they were withdrawing two battalions from the DRC before the dates mandated by the disengagement plan. On February 27, Uganda announced that it would withdraw 1,500 troops out of the northeastern DRC by early March.⁴⁹ Major General Jeje Odongo declared, "We are withdrawing because the troops are no longer necessary because of the positive attitude of President Joseph Kabila towards the Lusaka protocol." The battalions evacuated from Buta in Province Orientale and Gemena in the Equateur province.⁵⁰ Yet this optimism was somewhat dampened by the publication of a damning report on April 29 accusing Kampala of looting minerals in the DRC. Reacting angrily to the report, the Ugandans decided to withdraw from the peace process. In the *Sunday Vision* newspaper, President Museveni wrote, "I have now decided to recommend to the high command, the army council, and the government that Ugandan forces withdraw completely from DRC and also from the Lusaka process." Museveni gave no date for the completion of the withdrawal.⁵¹ Reacting to the statement, Kofi Annan said Uganda's withdrawal from the Lusaka peace accord was "not necessarily a set back if the authorities respect the spirit of the agreement." He added, "if indeed Uganda does withdraw and ends its engagement in the Congo and respects the spirit of the agreement, I think it will be fine."⁵²

Museveni said he threatened to pull out of the Lusaka peace process because he was "angry" with various partners and the overall lack of consensus on how to proceed. He noted that he was tired of the conflict, "We shall withdraw unilaterally and leave the Congolese to go on their own way."⁵³ Following this reversal, the Ugandan foreign minister, Eriya Kategaya, stated on May 8 that Uganda officially had decided to withdraw from most of its positions in the DRC but would remain party to the Lusaka process; he further stated, "Uganda will completely withdraw its forces from the following positions: Basankusu, Dongo, Gemena, Gbadolite, Lisala, Bagasende, Isiro, Butembo, Beni, and Kanyabayonga." By July 15, a total of 7,000 Ugandan troops were withdrawn from different parts of the DRC.⁵⁴ However, 2,000 troops were left behind. Kategaya said that Uganda would continue to "examine the wisdom of maintaining a presence in Buta and Bunia. Uganda will maintain a deployment on the western slopes of the Ruwenzori Mountains until Uganda's security interests have been addressed in accordance with the Lusaka peace accord."

The Rwandan army had made some moves toward withdrawing from the DRC but ultimately seemed more reluctant than the Ugandans. By March 20, it had completed the withdrawal of around 1,000 soldiers.

The Rwandan government called on other foreign armies to answer a UN call to do the same, noting that further withdrawals were contingent on such progress: "We will continue to monitor the action of the other side to see if more forces can be brought back home." A withdrawing Rwandan battalion pulled back from frontline positions and then marched to the town of Manono, where it was airlifted to Kigali. Another battalion marched from Manono to the port of Kalemie on the shores of Lake Tanganyika and returned to Rwanda by boat about a month later according to the Rwandan colonel Karenzi Karake. Rwanda was said to have originally deployed around 15,000 troops in the DRC to counter the threat of the Interahamwe. Contrary to the accusations made that spring, Paul Kagame declared, "We sent over 15,000 men to Congo to ensure peace and not to plunder Congo's gold."⁵⁵

Yet in April 2001, Rwanda still had significant numbers of soldiers in the DRC, and Kagame himself declared that Rwandan forces were not going to withdraw from the DRC. In Kasai Oriental, Rwandans in Mubau, some 200 kilometers from Mbuji-Mayi, appeared to be making preparations to stay, distributing Congolese identity cards among themselves after taking up Congolese names. One report noted that the Rwandans were occupying positions that had been abandoned by the FAC deep within Kivu and Katanga regions, and civilian jets and military aircraft were making flights between Rwanda and the DRC, depositing weapons, ammunition, and war equipment along the Pweto-Kakulu, Pweto-Kisadi, and Pweto-Kasamba corridors.⁵⁶ According to Leonard Ntwaremba, the DRC commissioner for relations with the UN mission, more and more Rwandan troops were being deployed about 60 kilometers from Pweto. In areas near Uvira in South Kivu, Rwandan troops were being reinforced and transported toward Kalemie and Momba by boat. These dynamics on the Rwandan side troubled anyone who wanted to see the process move forward. Bending to significant international pressure, Rwanda did at last withdraw a significant number of its forces from the DRC on August 30, but it remained unclear how many remained.

On the SADC side, Zimbabwe announced on April 3 that it planned to pull out 5,000 of its troops from the DRC in the "immediate future." Colonel Mbonisi Gatsheni, the Zimbabwean spokesman, stressed that the exercise, which began with the departure of 200 soldiers from the western town of Mbandaka, was a "force reduction" and not a complete withdrawal.⁵⁷ By June 2001, about 4,000 Zimbabwean troops from three battalions had pulled out of the DRC, but the withdrawal had been stalled to allow the deployment of UN monitors. Colonel Gatsheni was quoted as saying that the entire Masvingo-based contingent of four brigades had pulled out of the DRC, while sections of other battalions had also returned home from their areas of operations.⁵⁸

Angola had sent reinforcement troops to Kinshasa and Lubumbashi on January 22 to “strengthen security after Kabila’s assassination.”⁵⁹ But later, on April 6, the Angolan parliament scheduled a debate about the presence of Angolan troops in the DRC.⁶⁰ Five days later, the chief of staff of the Angolan Armed Forces (known as the FAA), General Armando Da Cruz Neto, promised that FAA members will leave the territory of the DRC in due time.⁶¹ This sentiment was reinforced by Defense Minister Kundi Paihama, who was quoted as saying that Angola’s troops in the DRC would return home “when it’s time” and that “We only have a small artillery support group, which stayed in the DRC after the down fall of Mobutu. We sent a reinforcement, also small, when Kabila was assassinated to prevent a crisis.” Paihama also said that “Angola has no more than a battalion in the DRC, no more than 300 men. When the process reached the point in which it is advisable for us to leave, then we will withdraw them all.”⁶²

Namibia’s attitude was similar to that of Angola. The Namibians did reinforce their troop presence in the DRC as part of an effort to support the new ruler Joseph Kabila. Defense Minister Erkki Nghimtina was quoted on January 25 as saying that Namibian Defense Forces (NDF) soldiers had left Namibia “to provide security to heads of state who attended Kabila’s funeral.” Nghimtina also said that the new Namibian troops “will help reinforce the allied forces to provide security cover to Kinshasa and Lubumbashi.” As many as 6,200 more allied troops arrived in the Congo to bolster the defenses of Kinshasa, the copper and cobalt city of Lubumbashi, and the diamond center of Mbuji-Mayi.⁶³ Despite all these early moves, the Namibian foreign minister, Theo-Ben Gurirab, said on February 8 that Windhoek was ready to withdraw its troops from the DRC and “is only waiting for a signal . . . from the UN” as outlined in the Lusaka agreement. On June 8, Namibia withdrew 600 troops from the DRC according to Defense Minister Nghimtina. He said that the 2,000-troop contingent in the DRC would continue to pull out until the completion of the exercise by the end of August.

These withdrawals in the spring and summer of 2001 were paralleled by the intense diplomatic efforts to see the Lusaka peace agreement implemented. On April 6, the JPC—comprised of the defense and foreign ministers of countries fighting in the DRC—opened talks in Lusaka to facilitate the withdrawal of all foreign forces.⁶⁴ A statement at the end of the meeting said that the commission charged with overseeing the peace process had succeeded in approving “the orderly withdrawal of all foreign forces” from the DRC.⁶⁵ A few months later, on June 11, the diplomatic effort was bolstered when Kofi Annan recommended the extension of the UN peacekeeping force’s mandate for another year. In addition, Deputy President Jacob Zuma of South Africa traveled to Kinshasa on July 15 as part of a mission to help build momentum for the

peace process.⁶⁶ Annan said on July 24 that he had obtained confirmation from all the regional leaders of their intention to withdraw from the country and that now it was important to turn their words into deeds. Some, however, remained reluctant to do so, particularly in the areas rich in natural resources.⁶⁷

DISARMING THE MILITIAS IN THE EAST: DISARMAMENT, REPATRIATION, AND REINTEGRATION

The “Disarmament, Repatriation, and Reintegration” (DRR) provision of the Harare disengagement plan was probably the most difficult part of the agreement to implement. This provision was introduced into the Lusaka protocol at the insistence of Rwanda and later incorporated into the Kampala and Harare disengagement plans. As the belligerents were working to implement the peace plan after the death of the elder Kabila, the issue of the armed groups rose to the fore. The groups concerned here varied, but the largest were associated with the ex-FAR, the Interahamwe, and the Congolese Mayi-Mayi. The Burundian rebel group known as the Forces for the Defense of Democracy (FDD) was also a sizable force, as were the Ugandan group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and the Angolan UNITA rebels.⁶⁸ On February 7, Paul Kagame reminded the Security Council that the withdrawal of Rwandan forces was contingent on the disarmament of the militia linked to the Rwandan genocide. Ten days later, an agreement was reached in Lusaka on February 16 by countries involved in the war on disarming Rwandan Hutu militia in the DRC.⁶⁹ More flexibility came from the DRC government, which on February 26 stated that it agreed with the UN Resolution 13–41 asking for the disarmament, repatriation, and reintegration of armed groups such as the Interahamwe and the ex-FAR.⁷⁰

The Zambian presidential minister Eric Silwamba said that although the UN had not been very active dealing with DRR issues, he was pleased that the Security Council had set a timetable and prioritized this issue. Silwamba added, “There must be a coordinated mechanism of disarming these groups.” A draft plan for the DRR was approved by the JMC in Lusaka on April 9, and specific details of the disarmament plan were to be reviewed at a meeting in Kinshasa by all the parties on April 17 and then presented to the Security Council for review. The Security Council met on June 12 in a closed-door session to discuss Secretary General Kofi Annan’s proposal for a “transition” to the UN peacekeeping mission’s third phase, which involved DRR armed elements in the country.⁷¹ Earlier, on May 19, the JPC also considered the draft plan in Lusaka.⁷² It was agreed that all parties would provide information on the numbers,

locations, and armaments of the armed groups in order to facilitate UN planning to assist the parties in the DRR process.⁷³ On June 8, Paul Kagame met with Joseph Kabila and Kofi Annan. During this tripartite meeting, Kagame expressed his disappointment to Kabila and Annan about the continuing DRC support of ex-FAR and Interahamwe forces. Another meeting between the three leaders was held on July 10 on disarming militia groups in Congo. They again discussed a plan agreed by regional leaders to disarm and demobilize militia groups. As one report noted, "Overall the leaders made progress in confidence building."⁷⁴ International support for the DRR process came on August 10, when Clare Short of the United Kingdom said that her government "would work with government of the DRC to take forward a quick start program to disarm and demobilize forces that supported the Rwandan genocide."⁷⁵

The focus on disarming the militias led to a new dynamic in the Great Lakes region. Annan on June 11 described a "particularly disturbing" phenomenon: an eastward movement of armed groups, including incursions into Rwanda, Burundi, and Tanzania. He said that armed elements "... are moving out of the DRC in order to evade participation in the disarmament program." The International Crisis Group warned that unless immediate attention was paid to the problem of foreign armed groups operating in the Congo, the peace process may well unravel.⁷⁶ As the armed groups began fleeing eastward, heavy fighting erupted on May 22 in Rwanda for the first time since 1999, pitting government soldiers against Hutu insurgents who were attacking from rear bases in the DRC. Hutu rebels penetrated into the northern Ruhengeri province. Assisted by local population, the Rwandan army killed thirty-five suspected Interahamwe and captured twenty-two.⁷⁷ A new Mayi-Mayi group called *Mouvement de la Renaissance du Congo-Mayi-Mayi* (MRC-MM) offered to collaborate with Rwanda in finding a solution to the problem of Interahamwe and ex-FAR based in Congolese territory. The group proposed that its forces could help serve as a buffer along the DRC border with Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi, taking into account the security concerns of the neighboring countries.⁷⁸ The emergence of the MRC-MM was a sign that there were divisions among the insurgents, and this was clearly illustrated by intense fighting on February 20 between Mayi-Mayi factions supported by Rwandan and Burundian Hutu rebels and the dreaded Interahamwe in South Kivu.⁷⁹

The eastward movement of militia groups also affected Burundi. Jan Van Eck of the Pretoria-based Center for International Political Studies observed, "Many of these armed movements which were based in eastern DRC were leaving for Burundi where no sanctions can be applied against them."⁸⁰ The FDD and the Interahamwe believed that they had

no future in the DRC and could possibly be captured by UN troops. According to the Lusaka agreement, the withdrawal of belligerent forces and the deployment of UN troops in the buffer zone should have paved the way for identifying, locating, assembling, disarming, and repatriating the so-called negative forces based in the DRC. Consequently, the Burundian FDD and the Hutu extremist Forces for National Liberation (FNL) groups had been taking refuge in Burundi in large numbers, particularly in the northwest Kibira Forest area. Burundian officials were afraid of an unfolding “nightmare scenario” amid reports that the FDD and the FNL had teamed up to launch a massive attack on the Burundian capital of Bujumbura. The new strategy appeared to have been adopted at a FDD Congress in Lubumbashi. The establishment of a strong Hutu movement in Burundi was feared in Kigali, because it could lead to a parallel situation in Rwanda.⁸¹ This movement eastward was not the only problem the DRR program was facing. Perhaps the most crucial was the ongoing fighting between insurgents and rebel forces in the east. The RCD-Goma issued an “ultimatum” to the Kinshasa government warning that it would resume the war unless Joseph Kabila would stop “transferring the war to the east.” The RCD-Goma secretary general, Ruberwa Azarias, issued the warning in Goma, adding, “There are daily infiltrations and the intensity is increasing since Joseph Kabila came to power.”⁸² In Maniema, there were reports that the strategic city of Lokandu has been captured by the Mayi-Mayi on August 3. Lokandu is situated on the banks of the Lualaba River, the largest headstream of the Congo River. The RCD spokesman, Kin Kiey Mulumba, declared that the city was of great strategic importance and that its fall would make Kindu, the capital of the Maniema province, vulnerable. But just two days later, the RCD commandant, General Gabriel Amisi Kumba, claimed that the town was retaken from the militia after two days of fighting.

Fighting also erupted in South Kivu soon after the death of Laurent Kabila. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Kinshasa indicated on February 9 that 15,000 persons had been displaced from Shabunda by the fighting between Mayi-Mayi militia and RCD-Goma troops.⁸³ In the region south of Bukavu, Burundian Hutu rebels of the FDD also intensified their actions. The RCD-Goma president, Adolphe Onusumba, stated, “It is regrettable that the fighting is continuing when hope was born from the recent Lusaka summit that the stalemate in the DRC peace process was about to be broken.” South Kivu authorities were concerned about the movement of Rwandan rebels who reportedly left Masisi in North Kivu and joined Mayi-Mayi forces led by a commander nicknamed General Sikatende who was based in Shabunda. “Those negative forces were ordered by Kinshasa to reorganize in order to attack us,” said an RCD official.⁸⁴ Not surprisingly,

the Mayi-Mayi combatants attacked Lemera and Gatobwe near Uvira on June 4, an area dominated by the Tutsi Banyamulenge. With the assistance of the Rwandan army, the RCD forces reacted on June 7 by launching a seven-day offensive into the central plateau of the Ruzizi Plain in the regions surrounding Lemera, Katobo, and Rugeje, during which they killed many insurgents.

In an attempt at reconciling with the insurgents, the secretary general of the RCD, Azarias Ruberwa, said that the Mayi-Mayi operating in the region were also Congolese and “not necessarily enemies even if they have been taught a negative ideology.” He added that the Mayi-Mayi were “prodigal children and would be welcomed back when they returned from the bush. They would be incorporated into the army, the police, and various projects, so the people of South Kivu should urge the Mayi-Mayi to lay down their weapons and build peace together with the other inhabitants of the province.”⁸⁵ The insurgents responded on June 4 with a “*ville morte*” operation in the city of Uvira, meaning a call for a general strike. The Mayi-Mayi distributed tracts calling for the ceasing of social and economic activity. All school and commerce activity was closed for two days and the streets of Uvira were empty. According to the tract, “The Mayi-Mayi were unhappy being led by foreigners” and warned that offensive would resume in the region. The local authority reacted firmly by arresting every individual suspected of having played a role in the distribution of the leaflets.⁸⁶ The RCD-Goma also increased its efforts to act against Mayi-Mayi combatants and their sympathizers. It said that the presumed authors of the pamphlets calling for the *ville morte* and their accomplices had been arrested, as had all taxi drivers and vendors who chose to remain off the streets.⁸⁷

In North Kivu too the situation was fluid. On February 16, Mayi-Mayi fighters attacked the small town of Kingi, which is situated 50 kilometers northwest of Goma. The Mayi-Mayi launched their attack with the assistance of ex-FAR and Interahamwe forces. During the night of the assault, the attackers burned down a dozen huts and, as one report related, “They literally pillaged the whole Kingi population and wounded four people.” When the security forces intervened, two Mayi-Mayi attackers, one ex-FAR and one Hutu militiaman were captured. Further operations were carried out to track the attackers who managed to flee into the forests in the Masisi area northwest of Goma.⁸⁸ RCD leaders called for extra vigilance to stop rebel “infiltrations” from Rwanda. RCD hailed the “enthusiasm” shown by the local self-defense units in the Walikale and Masisi areas.⁸⁹ Hutu militias began reentering North Kivu after being defeated in the provinces of Ruhengeri and Gisenyi in northeastern Rwanda in August, causing violence to flare up again.

THE LENDU/HEMA CONFLICT

Violence erupted in the far northeastern corner of the DRC on January 19, 2001, and it had absolutely nothing to do with Kabila's death. The militia of the Lendu and affiliated Ngiti people attacked the airport on the outskirts of Bunia at dawn and then moved into the city itself. One of their objectives apparently was to disable a Ugandan helicopter that had been used to attack them in the earlier conflicts. The militiamen, who attacked with bows and arrows, were driven back by the Ugandans using heavy weapons. The Lendu and Ngiti militia then attacked Hema families in several residential areas, killing more than fifty and wounding twenty. A Hema group of machete-wielding militia responded by breaking into houses in Lendu areas and killing more than 100 people. The outbreak of violence further destabilized the northeastern Congo at a time of uncertainty across the country.⁹⁰ Some 6,000 Hema took refuge across the border in western Uganda, while an estimated 10,000 people fled west toward Kisangani inside the DRC.⁹¹ Responding to this report, Amnesty International expressed grave fears for the safety of civilians in the Ituri region following the killing of roughly 200 civilians during this wave of Lendu-Hema violence. The UNCHR special rapporteur Roberto Garreton accused the Ugandan army of fomenting the Hema militia to carry out reprisal attacks and pursue the Lendu and Ngiti militia. Garreton accused Uganda of exacerbating tensions between the two ethnic groups.⁹²

In a report entitled "Uganda in Eastern DRC: Fueling Political and Ethnic Strife," Amnesty International documented how Ugandan authorities meddled in rivalries among RCD-Kisangani factions. Some of these quarrels degenerated into military skirmishes in which civilians were killed. The report showed how Ugandan soldiers intervened in the longstanding dispute between the Hema and Lendu peoples, in many cases lending firepower to Hema, sometimes in return for payment. During the two years of Ugandan occupation, the Hema-Lendu war claimed more than 7,000 lives and displaced an estimated 200,000 people. Uganda had pulled some of its troops out in recent weeks, but not from the areas most affected by the abuses described in the report: "Pulling out some of its troops does not relieve Uganda of the responsibility for investigating and punishing the soldiers who have been involved in the crimes."⁹³ The European Union expressed its deep concerns about the continuing violent clashes between the Hema and Lendu groups, and the massacres in the Bunia region. Traditional rivalry between the two communities had been exacerbated by the conflict in the DRC. The situation had been inflamed by the continued military presence of the Ugandan army in this part of the DRC.⁹⁴ As tensions appeared to be easing in Bunia, a leader of the new FLC coalition, François Mwamba,

traveled to the Ituri zone to try helping with the situation and to explain the objectives of the new groups.⁹⁵ Even the FLC leader, Jean-Pierre Bemba, urged the local authorities in Bunia “to put themselves first in the service of the population,” adding that “no political figure should take side in inter-ethnic quarrels.” In addition, he warned that “those amateurs who are still interested in shedding the blood of innocent people for ethnic reasons will be arrested and tried.” The FLC executive committee also proposed the option of constituting “without delay” a truth and reconciliation commission.⁹⁶

On February 18, it was reported that Hema and Lendu tribes had signed a treaty pledging to restore peace in their volatile region. The peace treaty was signed after a week of negotiations led by Dominique Kantu of the FLC. The report stated, “Last week Jean-Pierre Bemba met with all the local chiefs of Ituri, over 150 of them. The outcome of this was the signing on the 17th of an agreement that will ensure that conflict between the Hema and Lendu does not happen again. If there are any problems, however, they should be dealt through courts.” The chiefs also agreed that the governor of Ituri should not be a member of either tribe.⁹⁷ The protocol also provided for disarmament and an immediate cessation of hostilities. Training centers for militias would be dismantled, military movements and border crossings controlled, peace tribunals set up, and prisons rehabilitated. Furthermore, the accord stated that the FLC army would secure road sections and intersections to enable the free movement of goods and people. Both ethnic groups would send representatives into the rural areas to sensitize residents to peaceful coexistence and mutual tolerance. A follow-up commission would monitor and move the process forward.⁹⁸

Following this agreement, Hema and Lendu communities announced a reconciliation meeting to take place in Lendu-dominated Djugu district on February 22. Another reconciliation ceremony was to take place in the district of Irumu.⁹⁹ A day later, the FLC appointed two deputy governors to represent the rival Hema and Lendu communities. Imana Ingulu, secretary general of the FLC, announced the appointments of Ruhingwa Buguma and Emile Tchopa Goshelo Yochi, both of which took effect immediately. This was done after consultations with both Hema and Lendu communities and was officially decreed by Bemba.¹⁰⁰ Overall, the situation in Ituri was characterized by fear and tension. A UN-NGO mission visited the area from February 14 through 19 and traveled to several towns, villages, and sites in the province, including Aru, Bunia, Djugu, and Musumbuko. According to team members, “Fear is still prevailing in every part of the region, and rumors of the FLC-brokered peace treaty and speculative reconciliation gestures between 156 traditional chief in Bunia have not yet reached areas beyond the towns suburbs.” The report published by the team pointed out that the new authorities led by Bemba

had given themselves two weeks to move the population away from “the logic of fear and war” toward “mental recovery.” During this time period, the 156 chiefs will try to sensitize their respective communities.¹⁰¹ On July 9, officials of the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups appealed to people who fled the fighting in the Bunia area to return to their homes and resume their daily activities as calm had now returned.

THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS: HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Following Kabila's assassination, government authorities immediately detained eleven Lebanese nationals, and it was reported that some or possibly all of them had been killed while detained. The Associated Press quoted a witness to the events as saying that the names of the eleven Lebanese were found on a list in the assassin's pocket. The then justice minister, Mwenze Kongolo, termed the killings an “unfortunate incident,” and that the soldiers acted without authorization, killing in anger without the knowledge of the government. Kongolo said that more information was to be “given to the Lebanese government first and the rest of the public after.” Kabila's death was also followed by arbitrary arrests, illegal detentions, disappearances, and extrajudicial executions among people of the rebel-held areas.¹⁰²

In a report entitled “Deadly Conspiracies,” Amnesty International related that as of March 28 over 100 people from the Kivus were being held incommunicado and at risk of torture or execution. Several were arrested in the wake of Kabila's assassination. Amnesty feared that some of these individuals were being arbitrarily detained simply because they were from rebel-held areas. One high-profile casualty of these brutal tactics included a suspected ring leader of the alleged coup plot, Anselme Masasu Nindaga. After earlier denials, the government admitted that he had been executed.¹⁰³ Amnesty noted that those detained in connection with the assassination could not be expected to receive a fair trial if brought before the military court known as the *Cour d'Ordre Militaire* (COM).¹⁰⁴ In order to safeguard the physical integrity of these detainees, Amnesty urged the government to immediately publish the names and whereabouts of all those currently detained incommunicado in connection with the assassination and to allow immediate access to the detainees for relatives, lawyers, and doctors.¹⁰⁵

This report was followed by another one published on June 26 accusing the DRC government of routinely using torture against known or suspected government opponents, especially those threatening the authorities' hold on power.¹⁰⁶ Although in March 2001 Kabila announced the closure of all unofficial detention centers not supervised by the judiciary, such centers continued to hold criminal suspects and

government opponents. In July, Roberto Garreton openly denounced frequent human rights abuses by the new DRC government. Responding to questions regarding alleged human rights violations committed during the investigation of the January assassination and the status of the commission created to investigate the killing, the DRC attorney general Luhonge Kabinda Ngoy told Garreton, "The commission was still active . . . [It] is still working as instructed by the head of state who had set it up . . . and is trying to finalize the cases."

Members of the political opposition were also targeted for repression. On August 27, 2001, the leader of the political party *Forces Novatrices pour l'Union et la Solidarité* (FONUS), Joseph Olenghankoy, denounced the arrest of eleven party members at the Kinshasa airport, where they were waiting for him to return from a meeting held to prepare for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.¹⁰⁷ Local human rights organizations also expressed concern at the detention or disappearance of at least 200 political prisoners in Kinshasa-controlled territory. In a report on the human rights situation during the first 100 days of the new president's rule, the African Association for the Defense of Human Rights (ASADHO) said that little improvement had been made. The ASADHO condemned the "inquisitorial and secret character of the inquiry into Laurent-Désiré Kabila's assassination conducted entirely by the army and security service without any intervention by the judiciary." The association recommended the release of all "innocent" detainees being held under the inquiry. The association also condemned the use of secret jails by authorities despite the president's recent order to close them down. In addition, it recommended publication of the results of the inquiry into the late president's assassination and the liberalization of political activity. The ASADHO called on the government to reveal the whereabouts of its local representative in the southeastern city of Lubumbashi, Golden Misabiko, whom it believed to have been "kidnapped."¹⁰⁸

Another indication of the continued deterioration of the human rights situation was the arrest of N'sii Luanda, the president of the human rights group *Comité des Observateurs des Droits de l'Homme* (CODHO) in early June. Luanda was arrested by the *Agence Nationale de Renseignement* (ANR), the government's intelligence agency, after a press conference that he had organized to publicize the case of six child soldiers condemned to death by the COM. According to sources, Luanda was arrested because he had "suspect" phone numbers on his cell-phone. The numbers were said to be from the Kivus and were seen as evidence of his contact with the rebels. At the time the new regime was engaging in a charm offensive to change its image, the CODHO asked for the immediate liberation of its president.¹⁰⁹ These arrests were carried out while the DRC was preparing for a new human rights conference in June 24. "This repression of human rights activists was

in contradiction with the promise made by President Joseph Kabila to maintain and respect human rights.”¹¹⁰

Journalists were particularly targeted for torture and intimidation to prevent them from writing or publishing articles critical of the government. The Katangan journalist Guy Kasongo Kilembwe, chief staff writer of the newspaper *Pot Pourri*, was detained by the authorities on February 28. Representatives of the organization *Journaliste en danger* (JED) visited Kilembwe in his jail cell in the Kinshasa/Gombe prison. Kilembwe was arrested because of his article entitled “Kabila II Already Bewitched,” which was accompanied by a cartoon showing Joseph Kabila seated with someone showing him his behind, which in the Congo is viewed as a curse. In another article, the journal presented a list of ministers the new president should dismiss, among them was Interior Minister Gaetan Kakudji. Kilembwe was accused of working for a newspaper that was openly opposed to the government.¹¹¹ An organization for the defense of the media, Reporters Without Frontiers, indicated that on June 12 it had given a protest letter to Kikaya Bin Karubi, the government’s minister of information, following the arrest of Freddy Loseke Lisumbu, editor of the journal *L’Afrique Libre*. Lisumbu was accused of defaming the local church authorities and was awaiting trial in Kinshasa. The editor-in-chief of the pro-government newspaper *Avenir*, Joachim Diana Gikupa, was also arrested by the ANR in Kinshasa. The newspaper, which did not elaborate on the journalist’s work, condemned the action and said it had launched an official complaint against the ANR. An *Avenir* editorial declaimed, “If an editor-in-chief of an important daily needs to be interrogated for several days in a dungeon over a civil affair, then what use are the courts in the country?” Journalists were arbitrarily round up in the DRC, despite promises by President J. Kabila to improve the country’s human rights records.¹¹²

In rebel controlled-areas, the human rights situation was not much different. According to Garreton, torture and killing were common practice and a climate of terror prevailed. Those considered opponents were accused by the RCD of inciting “genocide.” This environment led to the assassination of several priests and pastors. Garreton particularly cited massacres of Ngenge, Kalehe, Kilambo, Katogota, Kamanyola, Lurbarika, Luberezi, Cidaho, Uvira, Shabunda, Lusenda-Lubumba, Lulingu, Butembo, and other locales.¹¹³ After the meeting with the UN envoy, rebel leaders rebuffed these charges of human rights abuses in the east. According to spokesman Kin Kiey Mulumba, “The territory under RCD control was far from being under a regime of terror as [Garreton] claims.” Mulumba rejected point by point accusations in Garreton’s report.¹¹⁴

The HRW also reported arbitrary arrests and unlawful detentions by the Rwandese army and RCD-Goma forces. The overwhelming majority

of detainees were held unlawfully for prolonged periods, often without charge, without having the opportunity to challenge the basis of their detention before the courts. Food was often not regularly provided and families were prevented from visiting the detainees. Many detainees were often secretly held in unofficial places of detention, including military officers' private homes, to prevent families and lawyers from finding them and to extract money from the detainees. Many were tortured or beaten with iron bars or sticks and women were raped.

It became increasingly difficult and dangerous for human rights defenders to investigate reports of human rights abuses and to publish the result of their investigations in RCD-controlled areas. They were frequently harassed and prevented from doing their work, and some were arbitrarily arrested and tortured. Observers noted that the RCD-Goma had stepped up its persecution of civil society activists in August 2001. Civil society leaders were set up to play an important role in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue that was meant to bring peace in the DRC, but the HRW noted that the rebel authorities were increasingly detaining, beating, and threatening such figures. On August 9, agents of the RCD department of security and intelligence abducted Pastor Claude Olenga, head of the justice and peace commission of the Archdiocese of Kisangani, and took him to their office, where they forced him to disrobe and then beat him severely. They interrogated him about the content of radio programs that he had broadcast on *Maria Malkia wa Amani* (Radio Mary Queen of Peace), a station owned by the Catholic Archdiocese of Bukavu. When released later that day, Olenga was ordered to keep silent about his ordeal.

Congolese activists campaigning for the demilitarization of Kisangani persistently delivered information about human rights abuses by the RCD to visiting foreign dignitaries, including Garretton and the Belgian prime minister. To silence and isolate critical activists, local RCD authorities denounced them on the radio and in public rallies as informants and agents of hostile foreigners. The RCD-Goma also prohibited activists from traveling and sent soldiers to intimidate them with nightly visits to their homes. When the political opponents of the RCD disrupted a rally meant to celebrate the third anniversary of the start of the rebellion on August 2, local authorities detained scores of alleged Mayi-Mayi accomplices, among them staff of the Elimu Foundation, an educational nonprofit, and members of the Action Committee for Integrated Development, a local civil society group. At least two of the detainees were beaten, one so severely as to require hospitalization. During the August crackdown, the HRW asked the RCD-Goma to put an end to the harassment and threatening of leaders of civil society.¹¹⁵ According to an Amnesty report, during the spring and summer of 2001, Rwandan forces raped many women and many also died from the lack of health

services destroyed by the war. The report also highlights the increasing recruitment of children into the fighting forces, police, and armed civilian paramilitary local defense forces (LDF), many under fifteen years of age and a substantial number less than twelve years old. It further stated, "Children suffer disproportionately from the general rigors of the combatants' life, especially in the bush, and are particularly vulnerable to disease and malnutrition. Frequently ill-treated or even killed by the commander, they have no protectors." The Amnesty report also stated that Rwandese and Burundian Hutu armed groups and *Mayi-Mayi* militia perpetrated numerous human rights violations. When they were not killed, "girls and women have been raped by combatants and threatened with death if they try to resist. Some have even been raped in front of their husband, parents, or other relatives. Victims of sexual violence often suffered further brutality, including beatings and having sharp object such as piece of wood inserted into their genitals." Some women did not resist the sexual violence in exchange for food, protection, or clothes.¹¹⁶

Even in areas controlled by the RCD-ML, human rights violations were widespread. During a visit to Bunia in Ituri on June 26, Amnesty International received disturbing reports of methods of torture inflicted upon the Lendu people by Ugandan soldiers. Torture methods comprised of beatings, burning victims' bodies with hot irons, regular use of leg irons, and prolonged detention in a refrigerated room. The RCD-ML also used torture as a weapon against its critics or those suspected of or known to support its opponents.¹¹⁷ On May 18, 2001, to call attention of the international community to the fighting in the east, *Mayi-Mayi* fighters kidnapped twenty foreigners, including twelve Thai nationals. In exchange for their release, the *Mayi-Mayi* asked for an unconditional withdrawal of Ugandan, Rwandan, and Burundian troops. The kidnapping took place near Beni, which was then controlled by the FLC. According to Radio France Internationale (RFI), the hostages also included one American and one French citizen who were involved in logging near the DRC-Uganda border. The hostages worked for a Thai/Ugandan lumber firm called Dara-Forest Company. On May 21, 2001, it was reported that the *Mayi-Mayi* had some two dozen foreigners in custody, and Bemba noted that "negotiations are on course with the hostage-takers." Confusion remained over the exact number of people kidnapped. The RFI reported that twenty-three Thais, seven Kenyans, and other foreigners were on the list.¹¹⁸ On July 30, 2001, the *Mayi-Mayi* faction in the northeastern DRC calling itself the Lumumbist National Resistance released one Kenyan and sixteen Thai hostages who had been held captive for more than two months. The hostages were released without conditions after Congolese politician François Lumumba spent six days in negotiations.¹¹⁹

THE KILLING OF CIVILIANS

A June 2001 report from Amnesty International highlighted the appalling extent to which civilians in the eastern DRC had been deprived of their most basic human rights. The report stressed the fact that they had no protection and no redress from the rebel authorities. It added, "This climate of fear and impunity has sparked an explosion of ethnic violence within eastern DRC. It has given rise to the population's enormous feeling of the injustice in being forgotten by the international community." The report appealed to the armed forces fighting in the east to halt further killings of unarmed civilians and condemned the devastating human toll in Rwandese-controlled areas of the eastern DRC: "The killing of thousands of Congolese civilians trapped in the middle of this destructive fighting cannot be justified by the Rwandan government and allied RCD-Goma authorities on the basis of security threats to Rwanda's borders." The report added that the abuses could also not be justified by Rwandese and Burundian Hutu armed opposition groups and the Congolese Mayi-Mayi militia who were fighting to throw out the Rwandese forces and their RCD-Goma allies.

Since Rwanda's second intervention in the DRC in 1998, tens of thousands of Congolese civilians have been unlawfully attacked, killed, and beaten by Rwandan forces. Many of the killings occurred in mineral-rich areas, where economic exploitation fueled the fighting. As the Amnesty report noted, "Women, children, and the elderly who have been unable to flee have often been victims of such attacks."¹²⁰ On July 2, 2001, the priest Father Marcién Babikanga of Notre Dame Cathedral in Kisangani condemned "deliberate and planned massacres" in Province Orientale by RCD-Goma. In a letter to the visiting Belgian prime minister, Guy Verhofstadt, he claimed that killings took place on the night of June 20 and 21 in an area around the villages of Kabalibali and Masimango, some 60 kilometers from Ubundu along the Congo River. The zone was controlled by the RCD-Goma, who "massacred and burned entire villages on the pretext of fighting the Mayi-Mayi." He called for an inquiry to investigate these facts, because "cases of this kind of gratuitous killings are countless."¹²¹

The instability in the eastern DRC led to killings of civilians by armed combatants and also by other civilians of differing ethnic groups (sometimes for seemingly irrational reasons). In the Ituri region, for example, the Ugandan army (UPDF) arrested eighty-nine people suspected of having taken part in the killings of at least 244 alleged "sorcerers" in the Aru, some 80 miles from the Sudanese border, in June 2001. About 140 survivors, most of them elderly farmers, took refuge at the UPDF district headquarters, some with machete wounds. UPDF intelligence officers in Bunia said, "The local authorities and people in the district treat the killings as normal. We had to move in and stop these stupid killings. They are even reluctant

to charge these people we have arrested. Two local chiefs are among the suspects held." Ovu Sudara, one of the chiefs in custody, said they were informed that the world had dedicated the month of June to eradicate sorcery. Records at the office of the district commissioner indicated that the killing started in June at Yuku village in the Otso community.¹²²

The Ugandan army explained that the killers had accused their neighbors of being responsible for some mysterious deaths, with some even arresting their own relatives and killing them on suspicion of being witches. Few of those arrested for the killings had shown remorse, maintaining they were being arrested "for eradicating wizards."¹²³ An update received by Captain Alfred Opio of UPDF reported that "394 people have been killed and 283 displaced, although 40 have returned to their villages." According to Opio, the first victim appears to have been a teacher who was discovered in possession of a list of names of people who had recently died. A reporter who recently visited the area said that hearsay had fueled local suspicion about an upsurge in witchcraft. "The village chief would blow a horn for an assembly. If you did not turn up they would find you and lynch you," said the reporter who declined to be identified. Otherwise they would beat a confession out of their victim and he would name his accomplices in the village or in neighboring villages.¹²⁴

At the time of Joseph Kabila's visit to Washington at the beginning of February, many observers began to assess the horrific toll the war had taken on the DRC's civilians. HRW reported, "As many as 1.7 million civilians have died through combat-related casualties as well as through deprivation of water, food, and health care." Peter Takirambudde of the Africa division of the HRW stated, "Among the many shifting alliances and changes of position in this war, one thing is perfectly clear: civilians have borne the brunt of the suffering. The Bush administration should be sending a straight forward message to Kabila and Kagame that abuses of civilians must stop, and stop now." The HRW called for a new international investigation into the massive violations of international humanitarian law in the second as well as in the first Congo War.¹²⁵ Reacting to the appalling statistics, Kofi Annan said on April 10 that the instruments available for the protection of civilians in armed conflicts are "in urgent need of updating." He added, "The current instruments were developed in a world where state actors were overwhelming dominant. The form of conflict most prevalent in the world today are internal involved the proliferation of armed groups."¹²⁶

THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS: THE REFUGEE SITUATION

In the week following Kabila's assassination, the UNHCR did not witness an increase in the number of Congolese fleeing their country.

Nonetheless, UNHCR officers in countries bordering the DRC did note a deepening of despair among the refugees who became convinced that the killing of Kabila condemned them to a longer exile. Things did worsen for refugees in the CAR when on July 20 the UNHCR started transferring urban Congolese in Bangui to a refugee camp north of the city. Refugees from the DRC's Equateur province who had been living in Bangui began asking for transfer out of the city after a May 28 coup attempt. This coup caused havoc in the CAR capital, and the ensuing violence there claimed the lives of ten refugees of Rwandese, Sudanese, and Congolese nationalities. Congolese refugees feared for their safety and many opted for a camp transfer in search of more secure conditions. Because of the coup, the CAR closed its borders in an effort to stop cross-border arms and dissident circulation from the DRC. The CAR home affairs minister, Theodore Bicko, noted that the border between the two countries was tense since the aborted coup d'état at the end of May. Roughly 25,000 CAR citizens crossed over to Zongo in the DRC to escape the fighting following the army mutiny led by General Andre Kolingba. Many of the weapons used in the mutiny had come from the DRC. Complicating matters was the fact that the MLC leader Jean-Pierre Bemba had helped in the crushing of the mutiny, and in exchange the CAR has been helping the rebels with supplies.¹²⁷

The UN Security Council expressed its "... deep concern at the precarious situation in the CAR" and urged "the government to make steps to end persisting acts of violence there." The climate at the time was not conducive for the return home of thousands of CAR citizens who had been displaced or had sought refuge in neighboring countries as a result of the attempted coup.¹²⁸ As of July 20, the UNHCR transferred in four separate convoys 205 Congolese refugees to Molange, a camp 138 kilometers north of the CAR capital. The Molange camp was opened in January for 1,600 refugees from the DRC who had just arrived in the CAR. Once in the camp, they received regular assistance, including food. By the summer, Bangui was home to about 9,000 urban refugees, most having come from Zongo and Libenge in the DRC.¹²⁹

While DRC refugees in the CAR were being transferred to another camp, those of the ROC were risking dangerous travel downriver in search of food and medicine. Within the week following Kabila's death, an average of forty-five Congolese refugees a day abandoned riverfront sites in the ROC by canoe, setting out for another camp controlled by the UNHCR. Refugees quitting the Liranga, Njoundou, and Mongombe temporary camps near the junction of the Ubangui and Congo Rivers said that insecurity and the lack of basic assistance were forcing more people to venture out on the waterway. Most headed for Loukolela, one of a string of sites along an 800-kilometer stretch of the river border and to which an estimated 100,000 Congolese fled between November

and December 2000.¹³⁰ Refugees said that more of the populations of Liranga and Njoundou, totaling some 25,000, would also like to flee downstream but lacked canoes. Loukolela, along with the towns of Impfondo and Betou, were the only points in northern ROC that the UNHCR could reach, and only by air.¹³¹

Hope for these refugees came on January 29 when \$1 million was allocated by the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO) through the UNHCR to assist refugees recently arrived in the ROC from the DRC. The funds were used to supply families with blankets, tarpaulins, kitchen utensils, and water containers.¹³² As of August 1, thousand of refugees from the DRC were still living in the ROC in precarious conditions. Back in December 2000, the river was impossible to use since the water level was low. The result was that health centers did not have medication and it took many days to reach the hospitals at Impfondo. But refugees nonetheless built small huts covered with materials distributed by the SEMIR, a local NGO aligned with the Catholic Charities. They lived of fishing and farming, mostly manioc. The indigenous people cohabited with them without problems. Refugees even rented land from them. The SEMIR put in place a program to create eighteen health centers and thirty schools for 8,000 children (40 percent of the refugees were children).¹³³

The movement of refugees into the CAR and ROC along the northern borders of the DRC was mirrored along the borders of the southeastern DRC. Congolese civilians worried about their security after the assassination of Laurent Kabila began streaming into Zambia before his lying-in state in Lubumbashi on January 19. The border between Congo and Zambia had been closed since January 17, but cars and trucks began making their way through the frontier post when the border reopened on January 19.¹³⁴ By the end of January, more than 200 refugees had arrived in the town of Kaputa, where they were sheltered at a Roman Catholic mission. By February 1, they were being moved to the Kala refugee camp, to which more Congolese refugees were trekking everyday.¹³⁵ This steady influx of DRC refugees into Zambia continued until mid-August 2001.

With this growing number of DRC refugees in Zambia, the need for humanitarian assistance expanded exponentially. On January 25, the United States donated \$200,000 for improving the welfare of DRC refugees in northern Zambia.¹³⁶ In July, the United States donated a total of \$400,000 to the refugees in Zambia, thus enabling the WFP and the UNHCR to purchase foodstuffs for camp residents.¹³⁷ The German government provided \$240,000 dollars for emergency assistance to the Congolese refugees in Zambia. The emergency assistance was used for the provision of household items, basic health needs, water and sanitation infrastructure, shelter materials, and other relief supplies.¹³⁸ These

contributions were welcomed by the World Food Program (WFP), but on March 14, it announced that the demands of the camps had outstripped the organization's resources. Unless donations came quickly, the WFP said it would soon not be able to continue to feed the 84,000 refugees in Zambia, and a massive shortage of basic food commodities such as maize had already struck the six Zambian refugee camps.¹³⁹

Despite efforts by the Zambian government to allocate 2.5 acres of land to each refugee family and World Vision's attempt to support farming of this land through the provision of tools and seeds, the overall situation of the refugees had worsened significantly by April 2001. The Zambian Immigration Department made it harder for refugees to get self-employment permits, thus preventing the refugees from rebuilding their lives in Zambia. Refugees were now required to show at least \$25,000 in assets to obtain the permit that earlier required no proof of assets. This condition was insurmountable for refugees.¹⁴⁰ Social conditions also continued to worsen, especially for the girls. Congolese girls were extremely vulnerable to rape and exploitation as they faced immense pressure to have sex with men who promised to improve their lives.

Kabila's death did not change the plight of Congolese refugees in Angola. Angola had been facing a massive internal refugee crisis caused by its own twenty-six-year civil war but nonetheless continued to house 6,000 Congolese refugees. They were regrouped in refugee camps on the outskirts of Luanda and in the southeastern province of Moxico. A Congolese man named Kapenda who lived in a camp in Viana, the largest refugee center operated by the UNHCR, told a reporter in August 2001, "It is no good: we eat poorly, corn every day, without meat or fish." In the Viana camp, 19,000 people—6,000 Congolese and 13,000 Angolans displaced by the civil war—shared two schools, one doctor, and twenty nurses. All were being fed by the WFP. Poor sanitation led to a variety of illnesses: chiefly malaria, but also tuberculosis, respiratory illness, and diarrhea. One relief worker noted that he would collect "from three to five corpses every day" in Viana. Life in the camp remained hard without a country, without work, without money, and without much variety of food. In Angola, refugees were faced with "serious difficulties due to discrimination, language barriers, a lack of jobs and access to education, and general unrest."¹⁴¹

A smaller influx of refugees and asylum seekers fled into Zimbabwe after Kabila's death. On February 1, Zimbabwean authorities detained at least thirty refugees from the Great Lakes region because there was some fear that they might try to kill President Mugabe. Before receiving asylum, Congolese refugees were questioned by state security agents: "State security officers visit the asylum seekers at Harare central police station first, and question them."¹⁴² The refugees phenomenon also affected the small country of Malawi. President Bakili Muluzi, who had attended

Kabila's funeral, publicly stated his concern over his country's ability to support a big influx of refugees. In late January, there were already 1,176 Congolese refugees in Malawi, and 424 had received refugee status while 812 were still waiting for their applications to be processed. In March 2001, ten to twenty asylum seekers from the DRC were registered at the refugee camp of Dzaleka.¹⁴³ Their number increased to thirty-two in mid-April. More refugees arrived in mid-April and were kept in Chilipa in northern Malawi near the Tanzanian border. By this time, the country already hosted 5,000 refugees from Rwanda, the DRC, and Burundi.¹⁴⁴

Tanzania probably received the largest number of refugees after Kabila's assassination. As fighting between pro- and anti-government forces continued in South Kivu, Congolese continued to stream into Kigoma in western Tanzania. For many DRC refugees in Tanzania, Kabila's death made the prospect for peace more remote. Many expressed fear that the country might break apart along ethnic lines and extend their stay in refugee camps indefinitely. Gearing up for new potential influxes, UNHCR officials said there were already almost 110,000 Congolese in camps in Tanzania.¹⁴⁵ The Kigoma regional commissioner, Abubakar Ngumia, told a radio reporter that 1,348 refugees were received, 1,255 from the DRC, over the month of February. Ngumia said that the Kigoma region continued to receive more refugees from the DRC despite the unfolding "signs of peace in the DRC."¹⁴⁶

The UNHCR called for prudence in the repatriation of over 100,000 Congolese refugees hosted by Tanzania despite the improving domestic situation in the DRC. The security situation in some parts of the DRC still remained unsettled although there were some positive and significant developments in the country. The statement insisted that voluntary repatriation would become possible "sooner rather than later," and that the UNHCR "will be ready to help them go home." According to the statement, the recent direction of events in the DRC was "encouraging," and the UNHCR "hoped that the emerging spirit of reconciliation and respect of human rights will prove lasting."¹⁴⁷ To help cope with food shortages in western Tanzania, France pledged food aid to the WFP. This was in reaction to the WFP's repeated appeal for food donations.¹⁴⁸ The United States announced on April 11 an additional contribution of \$26 million to the UNHCR for its 2001 annual programs. The new contribution brought the total funding for the UNHCR, including emergency funding, to \$172.5 million at that point in the fiscal year 2001.¹⁴⁹

But the misery ran deep in the Tanzanian refugee camps, especially among children. One girl interviewed by a reporter brought this aspect of surviving in camps vividly to life. The twelve-year-old named Salome did not like her life in the Nyaragusu refugee camp. She showed the reporter her drawing of two little purple people fighting over the peas

given out by the WFP. “There is not enough to eat,” she said. “What we have is these awful yellow peas. Back in Congo we used to eat well. We would eat all kinds of things.” She was weary of eating the same food for years and said that hunger was the worst problem in the camp. To illustrate this, she drew a picture of a girl eating a flower to get nourishment. The girl has little dots all over her feet. Salome explained that those were bites from chiggers that attack the exposed feet of the children in the camp. Their bites produced small, reddish welts on the skin accompanied by intense itching. Scratching at them can break the skin and lead to further infection. Chiggers were one of the greatest sources of misery for kids in the refugee camps who lacked adequate shoes. Salome drew two other people with chigger bites: one whose foot was covered in little welts and another unhappy child whose clothes were all torn to shreds. Salome told the reporter that among her favorites things in the world were pretty shoes, but now she has none at all and her clothes, which were once “nice and pretty,” were worn out. She said she “never gets to change them here in the camp.”¹⁵⁰

In addition to the widespread misery, the rape of women and children was common in the camps. Amina, a young girl, was raped by a neighbor in Lugufu camp. She had no idea that his intention was to marry her. Back in the Congo, when a man wanted to marry a woman, he would approach her family and work out a bridewealth payment. In the refugee camp, men had no jobs with which to earn bridewealth money, so paying the bridewealth posed a serious challenge. As a result, incidence of rape of young women increased. Outside the camps, men sometimes raped women they wanted to marry in order to reduce the bridewealth payment. A bride’s parents typically receive US\$1,000, but a bride who has been raped is worth no more than \$50. In the camps, usually a goat, duck, or some cloth was all that a rapist would have to pay the victim’s parents in compensation.

The refugee problem throughout the entire Great Lakes region extended far beyond the camps. More than 2,000 Congolese refugees, some carrying firearms, roamed illegally around Tanzania’s western Rukwa region. They were posing a big threat to the security of the region. The Tanzanian government identified and transferred some of these refugees to UNHCR camps in Kigoma, but it was becoming difficult to do so since local residents often hid them.¹⁵¹ Because of this growing insecurity, the Tanzanian president, Benjamin Mpaka, urged all refugees from neighboring countries who were staying outside refugee camps to immediately return to the camps.

Mpaka’s order came a few days after reports from Kigoma that some Tanzanians had abandoned their houses in fear of armed bandits, especially armed refugees from Burundi.¹⁵² Insecurity in western Tanzania soured relations between Tanzania and Burundi. The Burundian

president, Pierre Buyoya, accused Tanzania of training and arming Burundian rebels in the refugee camps. This prompted the Tanzanian President, Benjamin Mkapa, to propose in May that refugees be repatriated and sheltered in safe zones in their own country.¹⁵³ At a July forum of NGOs operating in Tanzania, members defended the populations of the refugee camps, declaring that none of them had witnessed any training activities in the camps.¹⁵⁴

Another country that continued to receive refugees from the DRC was Uganda. When the conflict between Hema and Lendu exploded in the Ituri region on January 19, the fighting sent 6,000 Hema refugees across the border into Uganda. The UNHCR transferred the newly arrived refugees to the Kyaka refugee camp 150 kilometers east of Bundibugyo. This camp was already housing 2,200 DRC refugees. Overall, Uganda had some 8,000 Congolese refugees and a further 208,000 refugees mostly from Sudan.¹⁵⁵ Hema refugees took with them around 25,000 heads of cattle across the border. UNHCR and the Ugandan authorities identified two temporary grazing areas in Chibuki and Mutungamo for the cattle the refugees brought with them. The refugee herds were vaccinated and the Hema refugees moved into transit centers in Rwabasengo and Kamuga, in the Bundibugyo district. Authorities distributed food and household supplies to these refugees.¹⁵⁶ The roughly 10,000 DRC refugees lived at four designated sites, primarily in southern Uganda. The 5,000 Congolese refugees resided at the sprawling Kyangwali camp, which experienced attacks by Ugandan ADF rebels. More than 2,000 Congolese lived at the Nakivale camp in Mbarara district, while about 1,000 resided at the Kyaka II site; fewer than 200 occupied the Rhino camp in northern Uganda.¹⁵⁷

A Hema woman named Wetu was among the refugees who arrived in Uganda after the fighting. She said she had lived with her parents, her children, and a brother in Ituri, but at present the family numbered just three. All were dead except for Wetu and her two children, and her home and her belongings had been burnt to ashes. Wetu was left with nothing but two children she could not feed.¹⁵⁸ The WFP was in charge of feeding more than 6,000 Congolese in Uganda as part of their whole Great Lakes regional operation assisting 1.2 million people in Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania through July 2001.¹⁵⁹ And by June 2000, the overall misery in the refugee camps was exacerbated by the rapid spread of AIDS. Infection rates in the camps were greatly elevated by the increase in rape. In the camps, where food and safe water were scarce, basic health care was often unavailable, and where there were so many more immediate threats to life, it was hard to educate people about a disease that does not manifest itself for a year.¹⁶⁰

By June 2000, many leaders in the NGO community were deeply concerned that the world community had forgotten about Congolese refugees

across East Africa. Oxfam's humanitarian director Paul Smith visited some of the camps and witnessed the suffering of these people neglected by the rest of the world. He lamented that "The plight of the people of the DRC has been cruelly ignored by the international community."¹⁶¹ Because the international donors' response to the UNHCR's fundraising campaign in 2000 was so pathetic, Ruud Lubbers, the former Dutch prime minister, chastised his fellow Europeans. He argued that the reduction in contributions from Europe was the primary reason that the UNHCR was about to announce program cuts that would diminish services for the refugees.¹⁶² Without further donations, the already grim situation in the Great Lakes region would become dire.

THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS: THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED

Kabila's assassination was followed by a cessation of the fighting along the 2,600 miles of front lines. The plight of the thousands of people who were internally displaced, out of sight while the fighting raged, became more apparent as the conflict tailed off. On June 8, the WFP announced that it was recommencing the distribution of food to thousands of hungry people in the Equateur province and other areas. The new shipments marked the agency's effort to expand assistance to thousands of displaced and hungry people who had been living on the front lines of the civil war for the three years. A WFP river barge arrived in Mbandaka in May carrying 527 tons of food, which was the first food relief to reach the city's shores in eight months due to the dangerous conditions on the Congo River. WFP teams found that the situation was critical in the rural areas and cities that sat directly on the front lines. Thousands of people who had fled into the forests slowly began to return to the towns where the MONUC observers were deployed. As one official noted, "We estimate that thousands remain hiding in the forest, but if the situation stabilizes, we can expect even more to come back who need food assistance." The main problem was that many were returning to areas where everything had been looted and destroyed, including fields, roads, and hospitals.¹⁶³

The withdrawal of armed forces some 200 kilometers north of Mbandaka revealed the situation of IDPs in that area. The WFP flew with the MONUC from Mbandaka to Makanza, Basankusu, Befale, and Bolomba, and as a result, officials estimated between Mbandaka and Ikela about 60,000 IDPs, all of whom were not expected to return to their places of origin. Food scarcity was widespread among them, a problem made worse by the military using up a part of the local supplies for their own needs. In Mbandaka itself, the WFP resumed its distribution to vulnerable groups starting in June. For example, on July 31, the WFP

sent off a chartered barge loaded with food for the city of Mbandaka. The load was large enough to feed 23,000 people in that city.

Yet food insecurity remained high in the cities or the northern DRC. With agricultural production in this fertile region made impossible by two years of conflict, most had little access to food.¹⁶⁴

To the south in Katanga, 14,000 displaced people from Pweto who were living in Dubie area were trying to come back to their villages. There were an additional 10,000 IDPs in Luanza and another 1,200 in Kilwa.¹⁶⁵ Most of these IDPs had not sought shelter in camps but had integrated into their host communities. The coping mechanisms of communities hosting the displaced were seriously overstretched. The health care system—already in a weak state when the conflict started in August 1998—was unable to cope with a sharp increase in epidemics among the IDPs. In the town of Pweto, incidence of diseases such as hemorrhagic fever, measles, and cholera had tripled due to the influx of displaced persons. Malnutrition rates among IDPs were likewise surging, and the UN estimated that less than half the displaced were receiving assistance. Many who hid in the forests were inaccessible as a result of insecurity; these constituted the most vulnerable IDP group. A high number of children were also in need of protection and humanitarian assistance, as war and displacement had broken down traditional coping mechanisms, forcing many to live on the street.¹⁶⁶

The situation in Katanga led the WFP to begin airlifting emergency relief to tens of thousands of people suffering from malnutrition and disease in the biggest aid operation since war broke out three years back. The WFP's Christiane Berthiaume stated, "Tens of thousands of people displaced by war are starting to leave the forest where they were hiding and are now heading home to villages which are completely destroyed. These people have nothing left, are in a deplorable state and suffering from serious malnutrition, with children in particular suffering from severe health problems." As the ceasefire seemed to be holding in the province and across the entire country, relief agencies were at last able to get to the sick and hungry. The WFP deliveries were airlifted into districts such as Manono, Nyunzu, Kongolo, Kabalo, Mulongo, and Kiambi, which according to Berthiaume were "areas cut off from the rest of the world during thirty-two months of war and where people have not been able to cultivate their land."¹⁶⁷ There were many IDPs in Malemba, Nkulu, and Kamina as well. The most vulnerable were some 1,000 people living in Kamina in a dilapidated, abandoned factory building with a collapsing roof, along with 500 unaccompanied and malnourished children at the time cared for by the Methodist Church.¹⁶⁸

In North Kivu, IDPs were mainly concentrated along the 65 miles of highway leading to Goma. Indeed, tens of thousands of internal refugees lived along this route. These people had fled their villagers in the face of

repeated violent attacks by several armed groups. The main perpetrators were the Interahamwe, local Mayi-Mayi militias, and rogue elements of the RCD rebel movement. A great number of the displaced fled to the relative safety of Goma, many among them were orphans and unaccompanied children. Some 450 attended a school set up by a local group, the National Association of Mothers Helping the Disenfranchised. But like many schools in Africa, it lacked books and pens. About 35 miles beyond Goma was Kiroliwwe, where hundred of huts covered with plastic tarps clung to a hillside. It was a camp for former refugees, Congolese Tutsis who until the previous year had lived in a camp in Rwanda. They started trickling back in July but were unable to return to their homes due to insecurity. Still, they were happier in the DRC. One refugee, Emmanuel Rwamakuba, remarked, "Here we can cultivate. Soon we will go to our own villages once there is peace." Because the RCD was unable to rout the Interahamwe and Mayi-Mayi, displaced populations tended to concentrate near RCD garrisons like the one on the hill above Kiroliwwe and Kichanga, some 50 miles from Goma. Approximately 55,000 people lived in groups of several dozen tiny, rocky plots of land.¹⁶⁹

Another region where the IDP problem was persistent was Ituri within Province Orientale, largely due to frequent clashes between the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups. When these clashes renewed in January 19, 2001, they drove more people from their homes. In addition to those who escaped to Uganda, an estimated 10,000 Hema reportedly fled west toward Kisangani inside the DRC. These IDPs claimed that the Lendus were targeting them as well as some Lendu moderates who were accused of being Hema sympathizers. The IDPs said the attackers operated in large group and were armed with guns, spears, and bows and arrows.

Many other displaced could be located in South Bunia. The agency Medair sent a team to visit the displaced in Irumu. The team found that several villages had been destroyed and some 5,000 people had been displaced. Many of the displaced were taken in by others, but this placed stress on food supplies. In Bunia itself, the assessment continued of the situation of the displaced, whose greatest concentration was around the cathedral Notre Dame des Grâces de Mudzi Maria. Relief efforts were being complicated by restricted access to much of the vulnerable population.¹⁷⁰ Representatives of humanitarian organizations were also reluctant to provide assistance to the victims of Lendu and Hema violence because extremists accused them of taking sides in the dispute or even of supplying arms to one of the rival groups. As a result of such accusations, six ICRC workers were killed in April, and it was suggested that the Lendu were behind their deaths.¹⁷¹ Action Against Hunger was assisting about 40,000 IDPs in Ituri and, beyond providing food, attempting to rehabilitate existing wells and build new water sources and sanitation facilities.¹⁷²

Overall, sheer numbers made the internal displacement problem the biggest humanitarian crisis in the Congo. More than 1.8 million people had been displaced due to the conflict. The new regime recognized the importance of addressing the issue immediately. On March 30, 2001, Joseph Kabila asked the UNHCR for an aid to facilitate the return of refugees and internally displaced Congolese. He said that his country had began the reconstruction process and that, therefore, the refugees could return home.¹⁷³

THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

One of the major problems faced by the DRC in trying to pull out of the cycle of conflict was the plundering of the country's natural resources. An article published in 2000 entitled "The Commercialization of Military Deployment in Africa" by Chris Dietrich revealed that the Zimbabwean government set up a private company, Osleg, specifically to purchase diamonds and gold in the DRC in order to make the deployment of the Zimbabwe Defense Force (ZDF) self-sustaining and ease the economic burden of involvement in the conflict. The Angolan army (FAA) also showed a substantial degree of "commercial opportunism" among its officers deployed in the DRC. They undertook "organized looting" as well as marketing and exploitation of concessions in the oil industry through Angola's national petrol company, SONANGOL.¹⁷⁴ On February 22, 2001, the Namibian minister of mines and energy, Jesaya Nyamu, admitted that Namibia had commercial interests in the DRC. Nyamu was quoted as saying that he had informed the UN that Namibia and the DRC were running the mine near Tshikapa in the southern DRC with the help of an American group according to an economic agreement made with the elder Kabila. The mine covered an area of 25 square kilometers near Maji-Munene, about 45 kilometers from Tshikapa and close to the Angolan border. Jesaya Nyamu defended his country's involvement: "Namibia and its partners are not at the mine to plunder, everything is being done within the framework of the legal agreement."¹⁷⁵

But the general perception in the world community was that DRC's resources were being looted, thus a UN panel was created to investigate the exploitation of these natural resources.¹⁷⁶ But information to the panel was still not forthcoming. Members of the Security Council expressed "disappointment with responses so far of several government to the inquiries made by the panel and called upon all governments to cooperate fully with the panel in carrying out their investigations."

On April 17, the UN panel issued its report, which noted that the illegal exploitation of the minerals and forest resources of the DRC was taking place at "an alarming rate." It distinguished mass looting and the systemic exploitation of natural resources as two phases of the plundering.

The conflict in the DRC had become one mainly concerning access by foreign armies to the country's rich mineral resources. According to the panel, the plunder of natural resources in the DRC had become the motive and engine of the war: "The DRC conflict has become one for the access and control of five key mineral resources: coltan, diamonds, copper, cobalt, and gold," said panel director Safiatou Ba-N'daw. Trafficking in timber, coffee, and ivory was also pervasive. As the report observed, "Almost all the belligerents are in one way or another profiting from the conflict." The panel recommended the prosecution of high-ranking officials, explicitly naming Museveni's son and his brother, Major General Salim Saleh, because of their active involvement in the looting. James Kazini, a former commander in charge of Ugandan forces in the DRC, was also mentioned.¹⁷⁷

According to the report, the DRC mineral resources were "appealing and hard to resist" in the context of the lawlessness and the weakness of central authority. Safiatou Ba-N'daw said, "We were very surprised by what we learned, not only about the scale of the exploitation, but by the speed in which it is taking place." The report noted that plundering, looting, racketeering, and criminal cartels were commonplace in occupied territories. The private sector played a vital role in the exploitation of resources and the continuation of the war; a number of companies had fueled the conflict directly by trading arms for natural resources, while others had facilitated access to funds to purchase weapons. "Top military commanders from various countries needed and continue to need this conflict for its lucrative nature and for temporarily solving some internal problems in those countries as well as allowing access to wealth." The panel recommended that the UN declare an embargo on the import or export of certain minerals from or to Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda.¹⁷⁸ It further showed how the Uganda-Thai company DARA-Forest in cooperation with rogue Congolese had cut mahogany and other timber at an alarming rate without any regard for law and forest management.

Enormous quantities of resources were being exported to companies in major industrial nations, including Japan, Belgium, and the United States. Coffee was taken from private plantations and wildlife had suffered. In one national park, only two of the 350 elephant families remained; a total of five tons of tusks had recently entered the black market for ivory. Yet the most lucrative trade was in diamonds, gold, and coltan. Prison labor, forced labor, and child labor were all employed in the extraction of these three resources. Occupiers also introduced further economic exploitation by levying heavy taxes in their areas. In addition, many would buy commodities with counterfeit money from Kenya, that country being a major producer of fake dollars. According to UN panel, the occupying armies were business armies, reaping profits for the high command and the political leader of their countries. Paul

Kagame himself at one point had called the conflict a “self-financing war,” bolstering the treasuries of Uganda and Rwanda. The World Bank had praised Uganda’s economic performances, overlooking the fact that the country that has no diamond mines had exported millions of dollars worth diamonds in the past four years. The occupiers had set up criminal cartels and international networks of front companies with banking links to keep this conflict going, noted UN experts.¹⁷⁹

As expected, Uganda rejected the accusations of the panel.¹⁸⁰ Because the UN urged the governments named by the report to conduct their own inquiries, Uganda sent members of parliament (MPs) belonging to Uganda’s parliamentary committee on presidential and foreign affairs to the DRC to investigate reports that senior UPDF commanders had been looting the country’s minerals. Museveni challenged the MPs to visit diamond and gold mine areas occupied by the UPDF in eastern DRC.¹⁸¹ On July 17, the MPs heard their first witness: a former district administration in western Uganda. Uganda also sent officials to the Security Council to argue against charges in the UN report. In an interview, the Ugandan defense minister, Amana Mbabazi, said that a delegation headed by him and mostly comprising the foreign ministry staff was to leave for New York on April 20. He said, “The government of Uganda is shocked by the heavy reliance on unnamed sources, unsubstantiated allegations, outright hearsay, and illogical conclusions. He added, “The report is aimed at bringing into disrepute the person and family of the Ugandan president.” He pointed out that the proposed sanctions against Uganda were completely inappropriate to the accusations, flawed as they were, because they “implicate individuals and not Uganda as a state.”¹⁸²

The Rwandan government also rejected the allegations made in the UN report. Patrick Mazimhaka, a presidential envoy, argued that the report was biased in favor of the Kinshasa government, and that it was an attempt to intimidate rebel groups in the east. He further asked, “By threatening sanctions against Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda, the UN is helping the Kinshasa government.”¹⁸³ Rwanda asked the UN Security Council to reject the report’s conclusion.¹⁸⁴ The RCD-Goma leadership also sent a delegation headed by Joseph Mudumbi Mulunda to New York to present its case to the UN Security Council.¹⁸⁵ All of this activity was due to the fact that the Security Council was due to consider the report and decide whether or not to endorse its findings. This led the HRW on April 20 to urge the UN Security Council to take action against the looting of resources by foreign troops in the DRC. It also addressed the devastating human right abuses being committed by these same troops. American Great Lakes expert Alison Des Forges stated, “While Ugandan commanders were plundering gold, looting timber, exporting coffee, and controlling illicit monopolies in the Ituri district, their troops were killing and otherwise abusing the local population.” The illegal exploitation

of resources also exacerbated the suffering of the population in the areas of the Kivu provinces occupied by Rwanda and Burundi.¹⁸⁶

On May 2, the UN Security Council condemned the illegal exploitation of natural resources and wealth in the DRC, expressed serious concern at those economic activities fueling the conflict, and asked Kofi Annan to extend the resource panel's mandate by three months. The report asked the expert panel to submit an addendum to its main report by providing an update of the relevant data and analysis. It also had to supply a response based as far as possible on corroborated evidence for the reactions of the state actors cited in the report and an assessment of whether progress has been made on the issues.¹⁸⁷ But a major change occurred in the panel composition, because on June 29 Kofi Annan recommended a career diplomat from Egypt, Mahmoud Kassem, to chair the panel investigating the illegal exploitation of natural resources in the DRC.¹⁸⁸ Kassem replaced Safiatou Ba N'daw, who was assigned as director of the special unit for technical cooperation among developing countries within the UNDP.¹⁸⁹ It was unclear what effect the new appointment would have on the panel's results.

The Inter-Congolese Dialogue

RESTARTING THE PROCESS

Ketumile Masire, the former Botswanan president and facilitator of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, had been viewed with suspicion by Kinshasa, but he nonetheless publicly expressed regret over Kabila's death. At the same time, he did note that the DRC peace process could have moved forward more quickly had Kabila and his ministers been more cooperative: "Kabila never really accepted me as the facilitator, but I don't think he was against me, but rather the whole process." He called for an immediate resumption of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, and when asked about its prospects, he responded, "Yes, I'm optimistic about Congolese peace process, but that's because things have been improving anyway. Recently, the deputy-chair of the Congolese cabinet invited me back as facilitator as long as I had a French-speaking counterpart. I told him I was prepared to accept a French-speaking adviser and he agreed."¹

Two weeks later, the DRC minister Léonard She Okitundu told journalists in Kinshasa that the government was proposing the appointment of a co-facilitator to work alongside the OAU-appointed Masire.² Denis Sassou of the ROC proposed the Senegalese president, Abdoulaye Wade, and the Gabonese president, Omar Bongo, as possible candidates for co-facilitator. The Gabonese ambassador to the DRC, Michel Madoungou, said that Omar Bongo was ready to take on this role, particularly in the preparatory phase, but in no way wished to serve as a replacement for Masire. Masire responded to these suggestions by saying that the proposition of appointing a co-mediator, particularly to reinforce the Francophone influence on the mediation team, was not a fundamental problem but remained a "complication" that might slow down the process. But if the signatories wanted to change the accord to appoint a co-mediator, then Masire said he did not have any problem with it.³ While this issue was being worked out, Masire held talks with the CAR president, Ange Felix Patasse, on January 31, 2001 and discussed the DRC situation. CAR radio broadcast that Masire was relaunching his

mission in the search for a negotiated settlement to the crisis.⁴ Masire also traveled to the ROC in early February and received support from President Sassou Nguesso. Officials from Nigeria, Benin, and Togo also pledged support. Masire updated the leaders of these countries about the preparations for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and asked to hear their positions on the key issues.

The Belgian foreign affairs minister, Louis Michel, also commenced a tour of central Africa on January 24 and stressed the importance of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in the process of establishing a renewed political environment in the DRC. He called upon Kinshasa to liberate political prisoners and allow oppositional political parties to operate freely. Michel also met with the leaders of the RCD-Goma, including Adolphe Onusumba in Kigali and Secretary General Azarias Ruberwa. Ruberwa made his position clear in a public pronouncement: "We ask Masire to call for a meeting between all parties of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue within thirty days."⁵

But there were still questions whether or not the DRC government was willing to allow Masire to continue with his work as facilitator. The issue first came up on February 2, when Joseph Kabila announced, "The Congolese people might not need anyone's presence in order to talk. . . . They can discuss the country's future with or without Mr. Masire." He added, "Of course, if and when his good offices are needed, we will have to get over the contradiction that led the suspension of the process."⁶ The late president Laurent Kabila had rejected Masire as facilitator of dialogue, accusing him of being a "complicator" and not a "facilitator."⁷ But on February 26 the authorities in Kinshasa officially reversed this stance by accepting Masire. She Okitundu stated, "President Masire has been invited to retake his mantle as the mediator of the process and continue efforts to assure the inclusion of all factions in the political dialogue."⁸

Masire welcomed the new Kabila regime's announcement and hoped the other parties to the conflict would match Kabila's "courageous" gesture. On March 17, he headed to Kinshasa after having been invited by Joseph Kabila to make his first visit since the assassination of the elder Kabila.⁹ Masire said in a statement that the talks would center on the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, noting that "one can't say much at this stage in the process."¹⁰ After his meeting with Kabila, Masire said that he had found common ground with the new leader, noting that they shared similar views about how the Inter-Congolese Dialogue should unfold. Masire nonetheless stopped short of naming an exact start date.

Masire also met with the armed opposition in the northern and eastern DRC. Consultations with RCD-Goma leaders in Goma and the MLC and the FLC in Beni were highly significant to the progress of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. Soon after, he traveled to Europe to see whether he could secure money that had been pledged but not yet

handed over for the talks process.¹¹ He then returned to Kinshasa on April 9 for more talks with the DRC government officials.¹² Masire's intensive efforts bore fruit: in early May, representatives of all domestic combatants gathered in Lusaka to sign a declaration of principles to facilitate political dialogue. The Zambian president, Frederick Chiluba, said, "For the last four months the peace process in the DRC has gained momentum that should not be lost." He appealed to all the parties to respect the principles in the signed document and to follow through on the political dialogue.¹³ These principles reaffirmed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the DRC, the process of national reconciliation, and the need for a new political order as the basis for rebuilding the DRC. The declaration also reaffirmed the organization of free, democratic, and transparent elections after a transitional period.¹⁴

On May 11, Masire announced, "All parties to the dialogue—government, political, armed opposition, and representatives of civil society—must meet mid-June to early July to set a date." He said that the Congolese people supported Kabila and were keen on the idea of dialogue.¹⁵ He was more specific two weeks later when he indicated that he would convene a preparatory meeting for the dialogue on July 16.¹⁶ To keep these preparations on track, Masire traveled to the eastern DRC on May 28 to hold talks with the rebels. He first met with RCD-Goma leaders and then saw representatives of the MLC. Earlier during the week he talked with the rebels, and Masire announced he would hold "broad consultations with the Congolese political opposition and civil society."¹⁷ He also visited many SADC leaders such as Joaquim Chisano of Mozambique, Sam Nujoma of Namibia, Eduardo dos Santos of Angola, Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, and Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. Masire explained, "I informed the heads of state of progress in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and I asked them of their opinion about what to do in the future." In addition, he briefed them about the preparatory meetings for the dialogue to be held in the Botswanan capital of Gaborone on July 16. Masire later reported that the heads of states responded favorably and pledged to make the peace process a success; he then made a similar tour of Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.¹⁸

In the meantime, time 100 senior members of the DRC-Goma met on May 20 to discuss their role in the national dialogue. At the outset of that meeting, DRC-Goma spokesperson Jean-Pierre Lola Kisanga publicly stated, "The political solution is best [option] for resolving the Congolese crisis" and added that the RCD would require restructuring in order to contribute to the solution. The participants at the meeting included founding members of the RCD, members of its executive committee, and top officers of the group "military, police, and administrative wings." On June 28 in Gbadolite, the MLC was in its third day of talks in preparation for the upcoming peace negotiations and also restructuring

itself. At the talks were members of the MLC and the RCD-ML, formerly led by Ernest Wamba dia Wamba who had merged to form the *Front pour la libération du Congo* (FLC) under the leadership Jean-Pierre Bemba. Bemba said that the talks in Gbadolite were aimed at hammering out a common position ahead of the July 16 preparatory meeting in Gaborone: “I have asked members of this congress to work on concrete proposals for the MLC and the RCD-ML to raise at the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.”¹⁹

The next big challenge for Masire was the selection of representatives to the pre-dialogue talks. After a meeting with Masire, the French diplomat Jean-David Levitte noted that the facilitator was having his representatives fan out across the DRC in June to help select participants.²⁰ Article Six of the “Fundamental Declaration of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue” that had been adopted by the signatories outlined how the choice of representatives would be made in each province. By June 23, representatives of civil society provinces were selected in six of the eleven provinces of the DRC. The six provinces in question were North Kivu, South Kivu, Katanga, Maniema, Orientale, and Ituri. A delegation from the mediator’s office headed by Hacem Ould Lebatt continued with its visits to other Congolese provinces to supervise the election of other representatives.²¹ In parts of Kasai Occidental controlled by the RCD-Goma, two more delegates were chosen from Dimbelenge, thus ending the selection of representatives from civil society groups under rebel-controlled territory. On July 5, the first two delegates representing civil society groups from the government-controlled territory were chosen according to Masire’s office, each being from Kananga in Kasai Oriental. With this selection, Masire’s delegation led by Hacem Ould Lebatt entered the final phase of its supervision.²²

To allow for time to complete the process, Masire announced on July 7 that preparatory talks scheduled for July 16 ahead of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue were postponed, noting that at least “a couple more weeks” were needed to complete the selection process, setting a new date of August 20.²³ Masire’s office announced on July 13 that seven of the eleven provinces of the DRC had already been visited by a team from the facilitator’s office. The towns of Kikwit, Bandundu, Mbandaka, Gemena, Matadi, and the capital city of Kinshasa still remained to be visited.²⁴ On July 27, Masire’s office announced that countrywide selection of representatives of civil society had been completed.²⁵

On August 3, a faction of the Mayi-Mayi tribal militia calling itself the Lumumbist National Resistance (LNR) was persuaded by the opposition politician François Lumumba to join the peace process. In a statement, a spokesperson for the Mayi-Mayi group said its members believed that the suffering endured by the people of the DRC was “essentially” due to the presence of foreign troops on Congolese soil: “We declare

ourselves party to the process of the resolution of the crisis as envisaged by the Lusaka accord and we invite all other Mayi-Mayi armed combatants to join our declaration.”²⁶ At this point, the government identified a thirteen-member team to participate in the preparatory talks, while the RCD-Goma chose thirteen as well.²⁷ Overall sixty-nine delegates—thirteen from the government, thirteen from the political opposition, thirteen from civil society, thirteen from the MLC, thirteen from the RCD-Goma, and four for the CRD-ML—gathered for the talks. Representatives from the governments of Namibia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, and Uganda were not invited; they were to attend the dialogue proper.

Masire urged members of the Congolese diaspora to seek participation in the dialogue. He urged dispersed Congolese to participate by joining or aligning themselves with either the government, the armed or unarmed opposition, or a civil society group: the four sides recognized by the Lusaka agreement.²⁸ When the pre-dialogue talks started, people who showed up unaffiliated were turned away. The Movement for Democracy and Development (MDD) opposition party expressed its “dissatisfaction” with the designation of participants to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and accused Masire of “forcing his will upon the Congolese people.”²⁹ Earlier Jacques Depelchin of the RCD-Kisangani also took issue with a decision taken by founding members of the RCD-Goma rebel group to “expel” numerous rebel representatives from the talks, accusing them of “desertion, high treason, and political wandering.” Calling the move an attempt to exclude the RCD-Kisangani from the approaching Inter-Congolese Dialogue and undermine the Lusaka peace agreement, the rebel groups other than the RCD-Goma urged all concerned parties to ensure full respect of “the letter and the spirit” of the agreement. Both Wamba and Depelchin, who left the RCD-Goma to form the RCD-Kisangani, were among those “expelled” from the process on July 27.³⁰ An RCD-ML official stated, “The exclusion policies of one tendency and of those who represent it create the possibility of the resumption of conflict.”

On August 9, the government of the DRC set up a committee to plan for the national dialogue. The panel, formed by presidential decree, gathered points of view about the long-awaited dialogue. The committee analyzed all issues surrounding the talks and kept regular contact with their facilitator. Balanda Mikwin Lelel, a former supreme court president, headed the committee, which will also include the head of the Protestant Church in the DRC, Monsignor Marni Bodho.³¹

The government of Sweden announced on July 25 that it would continue to support the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, contributing \$108,682 for the preparatory discussions. The EU considered the Inter-Congolese Dialogue to be a cornerstone of the Lusaka agreement. Kofi Annan hailed the positive developments in the DRC, emphasizing the progress toward

the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.³² The secretary general also expressed his full support for the appeals of the facilitator to the Congolese parties that women should be more fully represented in their delegations to the preparatory meeting and the dialogue itself; he hoped that gender issues would be included in the agenda.³³ The EU also welcomed the holding of the meeting in Gaborone on August 20 and urged all the participants to go to that meeting and to take part in proceedings in a constructive spirit.³⁴

PRE-DIALOGUE TALKS IN GABORONE

On August 18, President Joseph Kabila left for Gaborone for the opening of a groundbreaking meeting to plan national reconciliation talks in the DRC. Masire said that Kabila would attend only the opening ceremony of the meeting. Representatives from the government, the unarmed opposition, and civil society groups left Kinshasa for Gaborone on August 19. Delegates of the two main rebel movements also left for the preparatory meeting, which was to decide the date and venue for the dialogue.³⁵ Étienne Tshisekedi, who at the time headed *Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social* (UDPS), Congo's main civilian opposition party, did not attend, arguing that only the next round of talks was of political importance. Masire expressed dissatisfaction with the low number of women represented at the preparatory talks: "I have had to make an appeal to all parties to make a special effort to include more women in their delegations." This lack of female participants notwithstanding, nearly all the major players in the Congo conflict attended. The Botswana president, Festus Mogae, opened up the week-long session and urged Joseph Kabila and some sixty-nine representatives to use the talks to bring an end to the three-year-old war in the DRC that had involved six nations and killed an estimated 2.5 million people: "You should not lose this historic opportunity to make peace for your country and your people. The people of Congo have suffered enough."

The Zambian president, Frederick Chiluba, reminded the delegates, "For each day that passes without a resolution to the conflict, more precious lives will be lost. There will be no peace in the country until you decide genuinely and collectively that you want it."³⁶ Masire said, "The preparatory meeting has a highly symbolic value: Never before have we had the leaders of all persuasions come together like today, many of whom had never met before."³⁷ Masire said that the Inter-Congolese Dialogue needed to take place within six months, and that he expected tough going at the preparatory meeting to the dialogue but was optimistic the meeting would "go well." Masire said, "The Congolese and ourselves decided this would be a technical meeting, not a political forum and they should be left out, but they will be invited to the dialogue." The UN Security Council welcomed this preparatory meeting and encouraged the parties

to make all efforts to ensure the success of the session.³⁸ The UN envoy, Kamel Morjane, hailed the reconciliation talks that were underway as a move in the “right direction” but added that “the road remaining to be traveled is still long and littered with obstacles.”³⁹

Three prominent representatives from the government, rebel movements, and civil society gave their thoughts on the preparatory meeting. The DRC minister of human rights, Ntumba Luaba, gave assurances that the government’s approach to the talks would be “very open and constructive,” noting that its priorities were the restoration of the territorial integrity of the country and peace for the good of the Congolese people. An MLC representative, for his part, stated that his party was attending “with a spirit of openness. We are here to find solutions, not to block the discussions.” He cited as priority the establishment of new institutions and the drafting of a constitution for the DRC. The civil society representative Father Mulongo Malu Malu cautioned that the dialogue was not just a matter of arriving at a simple power-sharing arrangement. Rather, he said that the parties must seek “a new political order” and “an end to the system of a self-proclaimed president, and [create the ability for us] to choose our own leaders [and] action plans” in hopes of regenerating the DRC. He also urged that “a radical reform of the army” and resolution of the crisis in the provinces of North and South Kivu be given special consideration by all parties.⁴⁰

Kabila left Gaborone immediately after the opening session, a day earlier than planned. Officials told the AFP that he wanted to address the session, but that rebel leaders Jean-Pierre Bemba of the FLC and Adolphe Onusumba of the RCD had protested about this address. The meeting in Gaborone was to decide the date, the venue, the agenda, and the rules for the national dialogue. The formal dialogue was in turn going to prepare for new elections and a new political system in the DRC, as well as for disarmament and integration of the rebel forces into the army. A major real achievement of the pre-dialogue talks was most certainly the bringing of the unarmed opposition into the process. Unfortunately two days into the conference, Adolphe Onusumba also left, causing a stir before he left by demanding that Kabila step down in favor of a transitional government before the elections. Jean-Pierre Bemba of the FLC distanced himself from Onusumba’s call and remained until the close of talks on Friday, August 24. Despite these departures, the atmosphere was generally positive. The delegates agreed on the rules of procedure for the next round and on how political prisoners should be released. There was also a general consensus between parties on the need for the free movement of people and goods between Congo’s occupied zones.

The main disagreement was over the vexing issue of foreign troops. Most of the delegations except for the RCD signed a resolution demanding the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Congo “without delay.” The

RCD contended that it is not the job of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue to discuss the matter, which has been assigned by the Lusaka agreement to a Joint Military Committee of the belligerent states. The RCD's position was later endorsed by its ally, the Rwandan government, which declared that the meeting had no mandate to decide the issue. Father Apollinaire Muholongu Malu Malu, a delegate from North Kivu, observed, "Certain delegates wanted the withdrawal of foreign troops before the dialogue begins, while others did not want to see the withdrawal linked to the dialogue. Until this problem of withdrawal of foreign forces is solved, the discussion of other issues will be delayed." He added, "Even though rebel forces want a complete withdrawal of foreign forces, the government of the Congo wants the withdrawal process to begin first with the withdrawal of Uganda and Rwanda forces." Masire said that the issue of the withdrawal of foreign troops could not be dealt with in Gaborone: "I think there are mutual suspicions. Each party feels that if it pulls out first, then how can the continued presence of other armies in the DRC be justified?"⁴¹

Another important issue the participants needed to discuss was that of elections. Foreign Minister Léonard She Okitundu caused some controversy when he told reporters that elections would not be possible in Congo for at least three years, because a census, referendum, and constitution were needed first, and these would "take time" to achieve.⁴² Despite this potential sticking point, the secretary general's spokesperson Fred Eckhard sounded an optimistic note when he said that preparatory talks wrapped up with an agreement on when to begin the actual discussions: "The talks have gone well and all the parties agreed on October 15 as the date for the beginning of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue." He added that a venue for the meeting has not yet been decided, noting that decision, along with an agenda, would be determined within the next fifteen days.⁴³ According to the participants, South Africa emerged as the most likely venue for the long-awaited talks. François Lumumba told AFP that delegates showed strong support for the dialogue to take place in Durban or Johannesburg, and the government of Thabo Mbeki agreed to host and finance the event. According to Lumumba, Gabon and Ethiopia were also proposed but did not have the same capacity to fund the event. Bemba, who had initially favored RCD-occupied Kisangani, changed his mind and endorsed South Africa. She Okitundu still preferred that the dialogue be held in the DRC but hinted that he might compromise. Sources at the Gaborone talks said that the government appeared ready to have the dialogue take place in a third country provided the final agreement be signed in the DRC.⁴⁴

Sir Ketumile Masire announced on August 25 that the dialogue would start in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa on October 15. The DRC foreign minister, She Okitundu, who led the Kinshasa delegation at the preparatory meeting, supported this: "We did not want the question of

withdrawal to be a preconditions, because we didn't want to get the blame for blocking the dialogue."⁴⁵ Adding to this positive atmosphere, Bemba declared that he was preparing to lay down his arms and form a political party to oppose the Kinshasa government. He stated, "As soon as we agree on peace, a new political order, and constitution in our country, our military movement will turn into a political party." He also told AFP that he had traded his battle fatigues for a suit because he was in a process of making peace. Azarias Ruberwa of the Rwandan-backed RCD faction also added a cautiously encouraging evaluation: "The guns have fallen silent, relatively speaking. I cannot see any one of those parties—at least any of the serious ones—taking up arms again." He did, however, warn of "lingering concerns" over the issue of disarming the so-called negatives forces.⁴⁶

The Banyamulenge-Tutsis were also cautiously optimistic, issuing a list of peace conditions in a document titled "The Banyamulenge Manifesto of August 1, 2001 for Peace in Kivu." They called their manifesto "a platform of cultural, political, economic and social conditions aimed at fully and sincerely favoring the resolution, prevention, and non-violent management of the inter-ethnic conflict, which have plunged the Kivu region into mourning." The manifesto demanded an immediate end to "the ethnic cleansing of the Banyamulenge" and put forward "Ten conditions considered *sine qua non* for peace in Kivu." They also "confirmed without any ambiguity" that members of the group were of Congolese origin "since their presence in Congo dates before 1885." They called for the creation of an "international tribunal to investigate and judge the crimes, massacres, rapes, and massive violations of human rights against the Banyamulenge, a minority in danger of extinction."⁴⁷

Overall the UN secretary general was pleased with the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and its initiation on October 15, 2001 in Addis Ababa. He noted that for the first time since the start of the conflict, the Congolese parties were ready to sit at the same negotiating table and discuss how to achieve enduring peace and national reconciliation.⁴⁸ The government of Japan expressed hope that the dialogue would be held as scheduled and that all the parties concerned would engage in constructive discussions. An EU spokesperson also welcomed the positive spirit in which all parties participated in the pre-dialogue meeting and expressed optimism about the next meeting to be held in Addis Ababa starting on October 15. The EU strongly urged all Congolese parties to continue working in the same spirit of compromise and reconciliation as that had prevailed at the Gaborone meeting.⁴⁹

Editor's Note: At this point Professor Ngolet intended to write a detailed account of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue itself.

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NOTES

The reader will find that some of the quotes, especially in the latter chapters, do not come with citations. At the first draft stage, as with most historians, François Ngolet's notes were, at times, incomplete, missing, or abbreviated. We've done our best to make them as complete as possible, but there are still some instances of incomplete information.

INTRODUCTION

1. While Gabonese scholars have been quite prolific, producing a remarkable body of research, though most remain unpublished, the development of Gabonese studies in American and European academia is still in its early stage; see Christopher Gray, "Who Does Historical Research in Gabon? Obstacles to the Development of a Scholarly Tradition," *History in Africa* 21, 1994, pp. 413–433.
2. Jan Vansina, *Paths in the Rainforests: Toward a History of Political Tradition in Equatorial Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), and Georges Balandier, *Sociologie actuelle de l'Afrique Noire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1955). Balandier devotes the book to two main groups: the Bakongo of Congo and the Fang of Gabon.
3. Gilles Sautter, *De l'Atlantique au fleuve Congo: Une géographie du sous-peuplement* (Paris: Mouton, 1966).
4. François Ngolet, "Reexamining Population Decline Along the Gabon Estuary: A Case Study of the Bakele," in Michael C. Reed and James F. Barnes, eds., *Culture, Ecology, and Politics in Gabon's Rainforest* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), pp. 137–164.
5. Christopher Gray and François Ngolet, "Lambaréné, Okoumé and the Transformation of Labor along the Middle Ogooué (Gabon): 1870–1945," *Journal of African History* 40 (1) 1999, pp. 87–107.
6. See Thomas Turner, *The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality* (London: Zed Books, 2007); Gilbert M. Khadiagala, ed., *Security Dynamics in Africa's Great Lakes Region* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2006); Michael Nest, with François Grignon and Emizet Kisangani, *The Democratic Republic of Congo: Economic Dimensions of War and Peace* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2005); John F. Clark, ed., *The African Stakes of the Congo War* (New York: Palgrave, 2002); Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila*:

- A People's History* (London: Zed Books, 2002); and Ch. Didier Gondola, *The History of Congo* (Westport: Greenwood, 2002).
7. Both presidents Clinton and Bush visited Rwanda during their African tour, in 1998 and 2008 respectively. Clinton even issued an "apology," acknowledging that Washington and the international community failed Rwanda, "All over the world there were people like me sitting in offices who did not fully appreciate the depth and speed with which you were being engulfed by this unimaginable terror." But none dared to venture across the border into DRC let alone mention the equally devastating toll on human lives there.
 8. No modern conflict has so viciously targeted civilians, particularly girls and women, more than the Congo war. Rape has become one of the most dreaded weapons in the deadly arsenal deployed by all belligerents in North and South Kivu where an estimated 70 percent of women have been sexually assaulted by armed men; see: Human Rights Watch, *The War within the War: Sexual Violence against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo* (London: Zed Books, 2002); Maria Eriksson Baaz and Maria Stern, "Making Sense of Violence: Voices of Soldiers in the Congo," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 46 (2008), pp. 57–86.
 9. When refined, coltan (short for columbite-tantalite) becomes a heat-resistant metal with unique properties for storing electrical charge without heating devices such as cell phones, computer laptops and monitors, videogame consoles, and the like. Eighty percent of the world's reserves of coltan are found in the eastern part of the Congo. Coltan is so indispensable to the digital economy that the market price of one kilo skyrocketed from \$65 to \$600 in the 1990s. The price has since receded to \$100 and transnational corporations in connivance with their governments are determined to keep it low by any means necessary. Only recently has the Congolese government, backed by a G8-sponsored and German-financed pilot project, sought to develop a mineral fingerprint for coltan ore in order to track illegal mining and exports. "Blood coltan" could thus undergo the same scrutiny that led to the decline of "blood diamonds," thanks to the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.
 10. Coined by Belgian geologist Jules Comet in 1894 to describe Katanga's (Congo's southeastern province) mineral cornucopia, the expression "geological scandal" became, starting in the 1970s, synonymous with Congo's "paradox of plenty."
 11. Jan Vansina, "Yesterday's Memories and the Ambiguity of Immediate History," *African Studies Review* 43 (3), December 2000, p. 135.
 12. A precursor to this book and François' first foray into *histoire immédiate* of the Great Lakes region was an article he published in 2000, "African and American Connivance in Congo-Zaire," *Africa Today* 47 (1), Winter 2000, pp. 65–85, in which he discussed the web of regional and international interests and strategies that contributed to the downfall of Mobutu's regime.

1 ORIGINS OF THE REBELLION AGAINST KABILA

1. For a careful assessment of Kabila's missteps, see Jean-Claude Willame, *L'odyssée Kabila: un renouveau pour le Congo?* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999).
2. This term describes ethnic Tutsi who had lived in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo for several generations.
3. Colette Braeckman, Marie-France Cros, Gauthier de Villers, Frédéric François, Filip Reyntjens, François Ryckmans, and Jean-Claude Willame, *Kabila prend le pouvoir*, Edition GRIP, 1998.
4. The RPF was formed by diasporic Tutsi in Uganda in 1987. Many Tutsi had fled to Uganda beginning in 1959 due to ethnic purges after the overthrow of the Tutsi king of Rwanda, with the Hutu majority voting to abolish the monarchy in 1961. The RPF's military wing invaded Rwanda in 1990.
5. There was a general suspicion that those who refused to return were afraid of repercussions for acts of genocide committed during the 1994 genocide of the Tutsi by the Hutu.
6. Béatrice Umutesi, *Fuir ou Mourir au Zaïre: Le vécu d'une réfugiée Rwandaise* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000).
7. R. Garretton, UN Economic and Social Council on Human Rights, *Report on the Situation of Human Rights*, in accordance with the Commission Resolution, January 28, 1997, 39–40.
8. Garretton, *Report on the Situation of Human Rights*.
9. During that period ethnic strife was used as a strategy to divide the opposition, leading to many deaths among the Tutsis in the Kivus. Their expulsion from Zaïre by Kengo's government led to more violence, which was exacerbated by the flow of Hutu refugees after the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.
10. Other interviews were carried out among Hutu refugees in the Central African Republic and in Angola.
11. See de Villers, 290.
12. The regime was vigorously defended by Germain Mukendi and Bruno Kasonga in *Kabila: le retour du Congo*, Brussels, Quorum, 1997.
13. For details on the democratic reforms, see C. Braeckman, "La campagne victorieuse de l'AFDL," in C. Braeckman et al., *Kabila prend le pouvoir*.
14. Tshisekedi (born 1932) formed this party in 1982 to promote a peaceful transition to democratic rule. He had worked within the Mobutu regime on various occasions, including serving as prime minister several times in the early 1990s when Mobutu had promised a transition to democracy.
15. See C. Braeckman, "La campagne victorieuse de l'AFDL."
16. He was formerly a Mobutu ally, serving as secretary general of Mobutu's party, *Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution* (MPR).

17. See Gauthier de Villers and J.C. Willame, *République démocratique du Congo: Chronique politique d'un entre-deux-guerres, Octobre 1996-Juillet 1998*, Cahiers Africains no. 35–36 (Paris: l'Harmattan, 1999), 107.
18. *La Tempête des Tropiques*, September 1, 1998.
19. *Le Potentiel*, May 18, 1998.
20. For contacts between Kabila and the corporate world, see Jean-Claude Willame, *L'Odysée Kabila*, Chapter 3 specifically.
21. William Reno, "Mines, Money, and the Problem of State Building," *Issue*, Vol. XXVI/1 1998, 14–17.
22. The link between firms and private security organizations has been well documented in Sierra Leone, Angola, and Uganda. For details, see William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States*, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998).
23. The full details of this forum are contained in Jean-Claude Willame, "The 'Friends of the Congo' and the Kabila System," *Issue*, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, 1998, 27–30.
24. For the changes and adjustments to the numbers, see de Villers, op. cit., 352–363.
25. This is despite the efforts of the Moreels to engage the DRC government more actively.
26. For a description of this U.S. policy, see Jean-Claude Willame, "La nouvelle politique américaine," in C. Braeckman et al., *Kabila prend le pouvoir*.
27. See François Ngolet, "African and American Connivance in Congo-Zaire," *Africa Today*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (Winter 2000), pp. 65–85.
28. See de Villers, op. cit., 335.
29. The term "Lubakat" commonly refers to Luba people from the southern province of Katanga.
30. These tensions are contained, in "Kinshasa: les malentendus de la "libération," in C. Braeckman et al., *Kabila prend le pouvoir*, and Marie-France Cros, "Les défis à relever par Kabila," in C. Braeckman et al., *Kabila prend le pouvoir*.
31. de Villers, op. cit., 19.
32. This rumor was partially acknowledged in August 1998 at the beginning of the second rebellion. Pascal Tshipata Mukeda, head of the ADFL secret services, confirmed the existence of such a document, even though it was previously denied by Paul Kabongo, the first head of the ADFL secret services in May 1998. For more details see de Villers, 1998.
33. For more information on Kissasse's case, see Jean-Claude Willame, *L'Odysée Kabila: trajectoire pour un Congo nouveau?* Chapter 2 (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999).
34. For the formation of this party, see Wilungula B. Cosma, *Fizi 1967–1986: Le maquis Kabila*, Cahiers Africains (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997).

35. de Villers, op. cit., 49.
36. C. Braeckman has criticized Kabila's betrayal of the Tutsis after achieving power. See C. Braeckman, "La quadrature du cercle ou l'ingratitude obligée" in C. Braeckman et al., *Kabila prend le pouvoir*, and also de Villers, op. cit., 53.
37. Mukendi was a UDPS member close to PRP members in Brussels. His case demonstrates the interesting evolution of the situation of the Kasaien who were scapegoated by the Mobutu regime in Katanga. For more on this situation, see C. Braeckman, *Terreur africaine: Burundi, Rwanda, Zaire—les racines de la violence* (Paris: Fayard, 1996), and Marie-France Cros, "Les défis à relever par Kabila."
38. Another form used by the ADFL was "acclamation in football stadia." The appointment of non-ADFL governors or vice-governors in Kisangani, Kanga, Bandundu, and Mbandaka occurred in this fashion.
39. de Villers, op. cit., 69.
40. Also present were Eduardo Dos Santos of Angola and Frederic Chiluba of Zambia. Bizimungu, although a Hutu, derived his political power from the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front at this time.
41. For details on the tensions between the two groups, see Thomas Bakajika Banjikia, *Epuration ethnique en Afrique: Les "Kasaiens" (Katanga 1961–Shaba 1992)* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997).
42. *Le Potentiel*, September 19, 1997.
43. For the origins of this expression, see Crispin Bakatuseka, *La "Libération" de Lubumbashi* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999).
44. de Villers, op. cit., 64.
45. de Villers, op. cit., 86.
46. For details, see de Villers, op. cit., 94.
47. The Hemba are an ethnic group closely related to the Luba.
48. At the time of the incident, Kabwe was responsible for the airport security. See *La Libre Belgique*, September 27–28, 1997.
49. The Nande are the largest ethnic group in North Kivu, followed by the Hutu. They are non-Rwandophones.
50. The Bembe people can be found in the South Kivu province of the DRC and the Kigoma Region of Tanzania around the shore of Lake Tanganyika.
51. It is clear that Katangans were engaged in a fierce competition with the Tutsi. This probably began when the Tigers led the rebellion after the fall of Kisangani and clashed with the ADFL-dominated Banyamulenge. As a result, "General" Delphin Muland and other Lubakat officers were incarcerated. This arrest was probably due to the fact that the Tigers wanted to become an important political faction within the ADFL, to be led by Emile Ilunga. See de Villers, op. cit., 91 and *La Libre Belgique*, September 27–28, 1997.

52. For more details on this matter, see Jean-Bernard Gervais, *Kabila: Chronique d'une débacle annoncée* (Villeurbanne: Golias, 1999).
53. See de Villers, op. cit., 154.
54. The position of minister of state (*Ministre d'Etat*) had not existed before Kakudji's appointment.
55. de Villers, op. cit., 164.
56. This was undoubtedly an attempt to keep Bugera in check, as he was the only founder of the ADFL capable of challenging Kabila's authority.
57. de Villers, op. cit.
58. For further information on the failure to deal adequately with the citizenship question, see J.C Willame, *L'Odysée...*
59. A complete analysis of the situation in the Kivu is contained in J.-C. Willame, *Banyarwanda et Banyamulenge: Violences ethniques et gestion de l'identitaire au Kivu* (Brussels-Paris: Institut Africain-l'Harmattan, 1997) (Cahiers Africains No. 25).
60. Willame in de Villers, op. cit., 223; Filip Reyntjens, "Situation géostratégique en Afrique," in C. Braeckman et al., *Kabila prend le pouvoir*, and Marie-France Cros, "Les défis à relever par Kabila," in C. Braeckman et al., *Kabila prend le pouvoir*.
61. See Filip Reyntjens, "Situation géostratégique en Afrique."
62. Willame in de Villers, op. cit., 236.
63. Willame in de Villers, op. cit., 247.
64. See J.C Willame, *L'Odysée...*, 146.
65. Kambale Katahwa, "Insécurité au nord Kivu: Un rapport de la société civile de Butembo," March 1998.
66. The Bangilima are Hunde, Tembo, and Nyanga militia.

2 THE REBELLION

1. Integrated Regional Network for Central Africa (IRIN) Update No. 31-98, for Central and Eastern Africa, July 31, 1998.
2. IRIN Update No. 471 for Central and Eastern Africa, July 31, 1998.
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4. IRIN, "DRC: Rebels Consolidate Gains in West as Expatriate Evacuates," August 7, 1998.
5. Reuters, "Shooting in Kinshasa."
6. Reuters, "Shooting in Kinshasa."
7. Reuters, "Congo Government Calls for Calm after Shooting," August 3, 1998.
8. World Food Program (WFP), Emergency Report No. 31 1998, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, July 31, 1998.
9. Reuters, "Congo Government Calls for Calm after Shooting."
10. IRIN, "Congo Government Calls for Calm after Shooting."

11. Reuters, "Revolt Spreads in Kabila's Congo," August 4, 1998.
12. Reuters, "Congo Urges Neighbors to Avoid Rebellion," August 4, 1998.
13. IRIN Update No. 473 for Central and Eastern Africa, August 4, 1998; and U.S. Information Agency (USIA), "U.S. Watching Situation in DRC," August 5, 1998.
14. IRIN Update No. 472 for Central and Eastern Africa, August 3, 1998.
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16. IRIN Update No. 474 for Central and Eastern Africa, August 5, 1998.
17. IRIN Update No. 477 for central and Eastern Africa, August 10, 1998.
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19. IRIN, "DRC: Bunia in Rebel Hands, Uvira Quiet," August 13, 1998.
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23. Reuters, "Anti-Kabila Revolt Spreads to Congo's West," August 6, 1998.
24. Reuters, "Rebels Expelled from West Congo Port," August 10, 1998.
25. *Christian Science Monitor*, "At the Heart of an African Rebellion," August 11, 1998.
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27. IRIN: "DRC: Kinshasa Plunged into Darkness as Rebels Take Power Plant," August 13, 1998.
28. Reuters, "DR Congo Rivals for Showdown in West," August 18, 1998.
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30. IRIN-SA, "DRC: Zimbabwe Says SADC to Back Kabila," August 19, 1998.
31. Reuters, "Battle Brewing on DR Congo Western Front," August 19, 1998.
32. IRIN, "DRC: Zimbabwean, Angolan Troops Arrive to Back Kabila," August 20, 1998.
33. Reuters, "Congo Rebels Stalled in West, Angola Send Troops," August 25, 1998.
34. Reuters, "Rebels Attack Outskirts of Kinshasa," August 26, 1998.
35. IRIN: "DRC: Rebels Tell Angola They Have No Link with UNITA," August 27, 1998.

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37. IRIN Update No. 491 for Central and Eastern Africa, August 31, 1998.
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41. IRIN Update No. 520, October 10, 1998.
42. IRIN Weekly Roundup 42-98, October 9-15, 1998.
43. Agence France Presse (AFP), "Kabila Forms a New DR Congo Government to Kick Out 'Aggressors,'" March 15, 1999.
44. AFP, "Kabila Forms a New DR Congo Government."
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46. Reuters, "Congo's Kabila Seeks Army Victory after Talks Fail," September 16, 1998.
47. IRIN Update No. 504 for Central and Eastern Africa, September 17, 1998.
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17. AFP, "France Pledges \$700,000 to DR Congo Peace Commission," October 19, 1999.
18. AFP, "Five Million Dollars Raised for DRC Peace Process," October 31, 1999.
19. PANA, "Britain Donates £50,000 for Military Commission," November 10, 1999.
20. European Union, "The European Union Will Support the Implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and the Peace Process in the DRC by €1.2 Million," November 15, 1999.

21. IRIN-SA, "Africa: Holbrooke Outlines New U.S. Policy," December 7, 1999.
22. Government of Sweden, "Swedish Support to the Joint Military Commission in the DRC," November 26, 1999.
23. AFP, "New Timetable for DR Congo Peace Process Sought," January 13, 2000.
24. IRIN Update No. 876 for the Great Lakes, March 2, 2000.
25. IRIN-CEA, "Uganda: IRIN Interview with Minister Amama Mbabazi," March 17, 2000.
26. IRIN Update No. 896 for the Great Lakes, April 4, 2000.
27. AFP, "Signatories to the DR Congo Truce Agree on Total Ceasefire," April 8, 1999.
28. PANA, "Joint Military Commission on DRC Meets in Lusaka," June 2, 2000.
29. Xinhua, "Political Committee for Congo Ceasefire Adopts Mechanisms," June 9, 2000.
30. IRIN Update No. 1013 for the Great Lakes, September 18, 2000.
31. IRIN Update No. 1093 for the Great Lakes, January 16, 2001.
32. IRIN Update No. 713 for Central and Eastern Africa, July 13, 1999.
33. IRIN-SA, "Zimbabwe: Troops to Withdraw for DRC," July 14, 1999.
34. IRIN-SA, "DRC/Africa: Nigerian, Ghana Troops for DRC," July 14, 1999.
35. AFP, "UN Security Council Finalizes DRC Draft Resolution," July 23, 1999.
36. AFP, "Security Council Approves Deployment of UN Personnel in DRC," August 6, 1999.
37. IRIN Update No. 747 for Central and East Africa, August 31, 1999.
38. Following this development, on October 2, 1999, Rwanda pressed on the UN to deploy UN troops "as soon as possible" to enforce the recently signed peace accord. See IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup No. 39, September 25 to October 1, 1999.
39. IRIN Update No. 777 for the Great Lakes, October 12, 1999.
40. AFP, "DR Congo Belligerents Pledged to Keep UN Personnel Safe," October 12, 1999.
41. IRIN-SA, Newsbrief, October 18, 1999.
42. IRIN Update No. 782 for the Great Lakes, October 19, 1999.
43. IRIN-SA, "South Africa: Conference on Peacekeeping Opens," October 21, 1999.
44. AFP, "France Seeks Security Guarantees for UN Observers in DR Congo," November 8, 1999.
45. UN secretary general, "Special Envoy for DRC Peace Process to Travel to Kinshasa, November 7-10," November 8, 1999.
46. AFP, "Kinshasa, UN Reach Accord on Deployment of Observers," November 10, 1999.

47. Reuters, "UN Begins Delayed Congo Mission," November 11, 1999.
48. UN-DPI, "UN Begins Deployment of Remaining Military Liaison Officers to DRC," November 24, 1999.
49. AFP, "Four UN Observers Arrive in DR Congo HQ Town," November 26, 1999.
50. UN-DPI, "Mandate, Composition Approved for UN Mission in DRC," November 30, 1999.
51. When Special Envoy Kamel Morjane assumed his duties in Kinshasa on December 11, the state of the MONUC was one of disarray. See AFP, "South Africa Calls for Larger UN Role in DRC," December 7, 1999.
52. IRIN-SA, "Southern Africa: Southern African Leaders Concerned at Slow Pace in DRC," December 13, 1999.
53. UN Security Council, "Security Council Briefed on DRC by Under-Secretary for Peacekeeping," December 16, 1999.
54. UN Security Council, "Security Council Briefed on DRC by Under-Secretary for Peacekeeping," December 16, 1999.
55. IRIN Update No. 829 for the Great Lakes, December 23, 1999.
56. Although based on the assumption that the parties to the conflict would respect the Lusaka peace accord, the proposal recognized the realities on the ground. See AFP, "UN's Annan Recommends a 5,000-Member Protection Force for the DRC," January 19, 2000.
57. UN-DPI, "Security Council Holds Top-Level Meeting on DRC," January 24, 2000.
58. UN-SC, "Seven African Heads of State Address Security Council in Day-Long Meeting on DRC," January 24, 2000.
59. This UN Security Council meeting built upon the Maputo summit on January 16 and the Harare meeting on January 18 for the implementation of the Lusaka agreement. The council also proposed a revision of the calendar to implement the agreement.
60. Kabila had been suspecting the South African government of supporting the rebels. See IRIN-SA, "South Africa-DRC: IRIN Focus on the Peacekeeping Debate," January 26, 2000.
61. On February 3, 2000, the UN Security Council was slated to begin working on a resolution to authorize a UN force to monitor ceasefire in the DRC. See Reuters, "UN Council Begins to Move on Troops for Congo," January 26, 2000, and Reuters, "UN Council Moves Closer to Sending Force to Congo," February 3, 2000.
62. UN-DPI, "Security Council Members Back Kofi Annan's Proposed Force for DRC," February 4, 2000.
63. USAID, "Holbrooke Intends to Keep Emphasis on Africa," February 4, 2000.
64. *Christian Science Monitor*, "U.S. Role in Africa's Big War," February 22, 2000.

65. Reuters, "African Leaders Open Talks on New Congo Peace Deal," February 23, 2000.
66. IRIN Update No. 869 for Central and Eastern Africa, February 25, 2000.
67. The force of 5,500 Blue Helmets planned by the UN was only the second phase of the program. According to Amama Mbabazi, the first one was the deployment of ninety liaison officers, 500 observers, and four battalions to protect them. See IRIN, "Ouganda: Entretien avec le Ministre Amama Mbabazi," Mar, 7, 2000, and IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup: February 26–March 3, 2000.
68. On April 7, 2000, the new Rwandan president, Paul Kagame, expressed doubt that the 5,500 Blue Helmets and observers were sufficient, but he acknowledged that it was a step in the right direction. See IRIN Update No. 899 for the Great Lakes, April 7, 2000, and UN-DPI, "UN Team in DRC Visits Potential Bases for Peacekeeping," March 17, 2000.
69. IRIN Update No. 888 for the Great Lakes, March 23, 2000.
70. This ceasefire, building on the Lusaka accords of the previous August, was due to take effect on April 14.
71. AFP, "OAU Chief Calls for Rapid UN Troops of Deployment in DRC," April 11, 2000.
72. AFP, "African Leaders Appeal for Rapid UN Aid after Congo Ceasefire," April 9, 2000.
73. USAID, "Holbrooke Urges Congress to Support Lusaka Peace Plan," April 12, 2000.
74. UN-DPI, "Annan's Latest Report on DR Congo Shows Progress but Warns of Pitfalls," April 20, 2000.
75. He noted that the recent adoption of a disengagement plan by the Political Committee overseeing implementation of the Lusaka agreement would "lend impetus" to the deployment of some 5,500 troops and military observers. Given the assumption of cooperation from the warring parties, there was now an urgent need for the countries to contribute the necessary military personnel to the MONUC. See IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup, April 15–21, 2000.
76. UN-DPI, "Press Briefing by Special Representative for DRC," April 25, 2000.
77. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup, April 22–28, 2000.
78. AFP, "UN and Kinshasa Sign Agreement on Peacekeeping Force," May 4, 2000.
79. USAI, "Holbrooke Holds Press Conference in Kigali," May 8, 2000.
80. The major problems UN peacekeepers were facing in Sierra Leone may help to explain the cautious attitude the UN had toward deploying a peacekeeping force in the DRC.
81. IRIN Update No. 931 for the Great Lakes, May 25, 2000.

82. On June 29, 2000, the South African government approved \$15 million toward the deployment of about 160 technical support staff to the UN mission in the DRC. The South African military staff awaited a deployment date from the UN. See AFP, "South Africa Government Approves \$15 million for DR Congo Mission," June 29, 2000, and UN-DPI, "Security Council Welcomes Rwanda/Uganda Ceasefire of DR of Congo," June 8, 2000.
83. UN secretary general, "S.G. Appoints General Abdulsalami Abubakar of Nigeria as Special Envoy to the DRC," August 18, 2000.
84. IRIN Update No. 997 for the Great Lakes, August 25, 2000.
85. AFP, "Kinshasa Says It Is Ready to Receive UN Peacekeepers," September 3, 2000.
86. IRIN Update No. 1052 for the Great Lakes, November 14, 2000.
87. IRIN Update No. 1058 for the Great Lakes, November 23, 2000.
88. While these diplomatic advances and the Security Council's October 13 mandate extension until December 15, 2000 were positive developments, many UN officials were nonetheless growing frustrated. Some member states accused the UN of having a double standard for peacekeeping operations. See UN General Assembly, "Security Council Extended Role, 'Double Standard' among Issues Raised as Fourth Committee Concludes Discussion of Peacekeeping Operations," November 10, 2000.
89. On the African side, it was reported on November 30, 2000, in the meeting of the JPC that the belligerents had reaffirmed their pledges to withdraw their forces by at least 15 kilometers and that military chiefs would formally sign this new agreement in the Zimbabwean capital on December 5. See AFP, "DR of Congo Agrees to Discuss UN Observers Mission Says Mbeki," November 27, 2000.
90. UN-DPI, "Annan Recommends Six-Month Extension of UN Mission in DR of Congo," December 7, 2000.
91. UN secretary general, "S.G. in Statement on UN Mission in DRC Urges Respect for Terms of Lusaka Agreement," December 14, 2000.
92. IRIN Update No. 1082 for the Great Lakes, December 29, 2000.
93. IRIN Update No. 764 for Central and Eastern Africa, September 23, 1999.
94. The RCD-Goma rejected Matteo Zuppi, Edem Kodjo, and Emile Derlin Zinson as potential mediators. See IRIN Weekly Roundup, September 18–24, 1999.
95. The first functional meeting of the JMC took place in Kampala on October 11 and 12, 1999. On October 18, the meeting of the Political Committee had also (with the JMC) been delayed due to inadequate support from other countries and international organizations. See AFP, "UN Blamed for Slow Pace of DR Congo Peace," October 18, 1999.
96. IRIN Update No. 781 for the Great Lakes, October 18, 1999.

97. IRIN, Democratic Republic of Congo: IRIN Briefing on the Lusaka Peace Process, November 10, 1999.
98. IRIN-SA, Weekly Roundup, November 27–December 3, 1999.
99. IRIN Update No. 819 for the Great Lakes, December 9, 1999.
100. IRIN-SA, “Southern Africa: Southern African Leaders Concerned at Slow Pace in DRC,” December 13, 1999.
101. IRIN Update No. 835 for the Great Lakes, January 7, 2000.
102. IRIN Update No. 846 for the Great Lakes, January 25, 2000.
103. USIA, “Masire Rates US-UN Cooperation Vital to African Peace,” January 28, 2000.
104. IRIN Update No. 902 for the Great Lakes, April 12, 2000.
105. IRIN Update No. 905 for the Great Lakes, April 17, 2000.
106. IRIN Update No. 910 for the Great Lakes, April 26, 2000.
107. IRIN Update No. 911 for the Great Lakes, April 27, 2000.
108. IRIN Update No. 922 for the Great Lakes, May 12, 2000.
109. AFP, “DR Congo Mediator Ketumile Masire Due to Meet Rebels Wednesday,” May 15, 2000.
110. Masire suspected that Kabila was trying to cause the collapse of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue when he announced that he was going to create a transition assembly because the organization of the negotiations was taking too long.
111. IRIN, DR Interview with Ketumile Masire, May 17, 2000.
112. PANA, “Cotonou to Host DRC Preparatory Peace Meeting,” May 30, 2000.
113. IRIN Update No. 941 for the Great Lakes, June 8, 2000.
114. USIA, “Statement on Democratic Republic of Congo,” June 4, 2000.
115. IRIN Update No. 829 for the Great Lakes, December 23, 1999.
116. IRIN Update No. 844 for the Great Lakes, January 25, 2000.
117. USIA, “UN Security Council to Hold Major Session on DRC,” January 21, 2000.
118. IRIN, Interview with the UN secretary general, Kofi Annan, February 1, 2000.
119. IRIN Update No. 862 for Central and Eastern Africa, February 16, 2000.
120. IRIN Update No. 856 for the Great Lakes, February 8, 2000.
121. IRIN Update No. 909 for the Great Lakes, April 25, 2000.
122. Reuters, “African Leaders Urge UN to Deploy Congo Force,” April 20, 2000.
123. U.S. Department of State, “UN Security Council Mission Leaving for DRC,” May 1, 2000.
124. IRIN-CEA Update No. 913 for the Great Lakes, May 1, 2000.
125. U.S. Department of State, “Holbrooke on the DRC,” June 15, 2000.
126. UN Security Council, Security Council Resolution 1304 (2000) on the situation concerning the DRC, June 16, 2000.

127. U.S. Department of State, "State Department Spokesman on the Lusaka Summit," August 16, 2000.
128. IRIN-SA, "Zimbabwe-DRC: Pressure Mounts for Troops to Leave," August 14, 2000.
129. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup, August 18, 2000.
130. AFP, "Lusaka Ceasefire Accord Stalls in DR Congo Peace Process," August 29, 2000.
131. UN-DPI, "Little Progress Made in DRC Peace Process, Says Annan," September 22, 2000.
132. UN-DPI, "Peace in DRC Depends on Will of Congolese People, Says UN Envoy," December 21, 2000.
133. AFP, "Meeting on DR Congo Conflict Postponed," December 21, 2000.

6 VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

1. IRIN Update No. 714 for Central and Eastern Africa, July 23, 1999.
2. Bemba added that "Kabila violated his own signature on Sunday. We have been attacked by Kabila's forces this week, so what does it mean?"
3. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup 29, July 17–23, 1999.
4. This happened at the time rebel leaders were meeting in Tanzania to decide who should sign the ceasefire. See Reuters, "Congo Rebels Say They Killed 24 Government Soldiers," July 27, 1999.
5. At this time, the MLC had signed the Lusaka agreement. Makanza and Bogbonga are almost opposite each on the banks of the Congo River (420 miles upriver from Kinshasa).
6. *Mail & Guardian* (South Africa), "Congo Peace Put in Peril by Air Raids Claim," August 5, 1999.
7. AFP, "Air Kills 600 DRC Rebels," August 4, 1999.
8. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup 31, July 31–August 6, 1999.
9. IRIN-CEA, "CAR: Congolese Soldiers Threaten Stability," August 23, 1999.
10. IRIN Update No. 759 for Central and Eastern Africa, September 16, 1999.
11. IRIN Weekly Roundup 47 for Central and Eastern Africa, November 26, 1999.
12. IRIN Update No. 810 for the Great Lakes, November 26, 1999.
13. IRIN Update No. 818 for the Great Lakes, December 8, 1999.
14. This was the first time rebels conceded losing one of their positions to the Kinshasa government. AFP, "Kinshasa Troops Retake Key Rebel-Held Town in DRC," December 3, 1999.
15. IRIN Update No. 815 for the Great Lakes, December 3, 1999.
16. Reuters, "Congo Conflict Reignites, Fighting Spreads," December 3, 1999.

17. On December 10, 1999, Zimbabwean officials denied that there was an accord between Rwanda and Zimbabwe regarding the soldiers trapped in Ikela. They said they would continue to use force to bring supplies to their forces in Ikela. See IRIN Update No. 820 for the Great Lakes, December 10, 1999. Meanwhile, on January 14, 2000, the condition of government-allied forces trapped by RCD rebels in Ikela was unknown, with conflicting reports that a rescue mission was about to breakthrough. See IRIN-CEA Weekly Roundup for January 8 through 14, 2000.
18. IRIN Update No. 821 for the Great Lakes, December 13, 1999.
19. IRIN Update No. 834 for the Great Lakes, January 6, 2000.
20. IRIN Update, No. 836 for the Great Lakes, January 11, 2000.
21. IRIN Update, No. 854 for the Great Lakes, February 4, 2000.
22. IRIN Update No. 894 for the Great Lakes, March 31, 2000, and IRIN Update No. 898 for the Great Lakes, April 6, 2000.
23. This coincided with the UN Security Council team assessment to prepare for the deployment of 5,500 troops. See AFP, "DR Congo Rebels Seize Strategic Government Position, Says Kinshasa," May 8, 2000.
24. IRIN Update No. 921 for the Great Lakes, May 11, 2000.
25. AFP, "Bloody Fighting Rages in Northern DR Congo, Say CAR Soldiers," September 1, 2000.
26. IRIN Update No. 1010 for the Great Lakes, September 13, 2000.
27. AFP, "Civilians Bear Burnt of Clashes in DR Congo's Equateur Province," October 3, 2000.
28. IRIN Update No. 1027 for the Great Lakes, October 6, 2000.
29. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup No. 40, September 30–October 6, 2000.
30. IRIN Update No. 1067 for the Great Lakes, December 6, 2000.
31. IRIN Update for the Great Lakes, December 27, 2000.
32. IRIN-SA, "Southern Africa: IRIN News Briefs," January 2, 2001.
33. On January 2, 2001, Bemba announced that a Zimbabwean MIG had been downed after it had bombed the town of Basankusu. See IRIN Update No. 1083 for the Great Lakes, January 2, 2001.
34. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup No. 7, February 12–18, 2000.
35. The MLC described this as a successful counterattack after a government offensive. See IRIN Update No. 925 for the Great Lakes Region, May 17, 2000.
36. AFP, "Rebels Report Profusion of Ceasefire Violations in DR Congo Province," August 17, 2000.
37. PANA, "DRC Allies Threaten Punitive Action against Rebels," October 10, 2000.
38. IRIN-CEA Weekly Roundup No. 41, October 7–13, 2000.
39. AFP, "DR Congo Rebels Moving Troops, Arms, Despite Accord," September 20, 1999.
40. USIA, "Rubin Comments on Renewed Fighting in DROC," October 4, 1999.

41. IRIN Update No. 768 for Central and Eastern Africa, September 29, 1999.
42. IRIN Update No. 895 for the Great Lakes, April 3, 2000.
43. IRIN Update No. 766 for Central and Eastern Africa, September 27, 1999.
44. This followed the signing of the Lusaka agreement by the rebels.
45. AFP, "Rebel Clashes in Third Day in Southeast DRC," October 9, 1999.
46. Karaha played down the move by saying that it had no major significance.
47. While this offensive was being carried out, the northern front was reported to be quiet for the time being, but "extensive preparations" for war suggested that it would not remain so. See IRIN-CEA Weekly Roundup 12, March 18–24, 2000.
48. In recent months fighting has been limited to the northwest DRC, where Ugandan-backed MLC is fighting government troops. See IRIN Update No. 985 for the Great Lakes, August 9, 2000.
49. IRIN Update No. 1038 for the Great Lakes, October 24, 2000.
50. IRIN Update No. 1043 for the Great Lakes, November 1, 2000.
51. There were now fears that fighting in Katanga could derail the so-called Maputo process, a parallel to the Lusaka peace initiative arising from the face-to-face meeting of Kabila and his allies. See IRIN Update No. 1045 for the Great Lakes, November 3, 2000. On November 11, 2000, there was an update on the number of casualties. A report said that 110 soldiers were killed during the fighting for the control of Pepa: 100 government soldiers and ten rebels. See AFP, "More than 110 Killed in the Fighting over DRC Town, Says Rebels," November 11, 2000. On November 23, rebel spokesman Mulumba said that so far, the RCD had retaken control of the area around Pepa, including the airport.
52. IRIN Update No. 1075 for the Great Lakes, December 18, 2000.
53. IRIN Update No. 1081 for the Great Lakes, December 28, 2000.
54. Colonel Charles Kayonga of the RPA will not pull out of (Pweto) recently captured areas.
55. Zimbabwean officials confirmed that the fighting was taking place but denied that its plane has been shot down.
56. IRIN-SA: IRIN News Briefs, December 8, 2000.
57. IRIN Update No. 1086 for the Great Lakes, January 5, 2001.
58. IRIN-SA, "DRC & Zambia: IRIN Focus on Kabila Deserters," January 8, 2001.
59. On July 27, 1999, a group of RCD rebels burnt thirty-three civilians in the eastern village of Katala in Mitwaba. A statement issued in Harare, on behalf of the DRC government and their allies Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, accused the rebels of continuing to violate the ceasefire. See AFP, "DR Congo: Rwandese Rebels Accused of Burning 33 Civilians to Death," August 9, 1999.

60. IRIN Update No. 753 for Central and Eastern Africa, September 8, 1999.
61. IRIN Update No. 792 for the Great Lakes, November 2, 1999.
62. IRIN Weekly Roundup 47, November 20–26, 1999.
63. IRIN Update No. 857 for the Great Lakes, February 9, 2000.
64. IRIN Update No. 875 for the Great Lakes, March 6, 2000.
65. IRIN Update No. 861 for the Great Lakes, February 15, 2000, and IRIN-CEA, and Update No. 885 for the Great Lakes Region, March 20, 2000.
66. IRIN Update No. 867 for the Great Lakes, February 23, 2000.
67. IRIN Update No. 882 for the Great Lakes, March 15, 2000.
68. On February 19, the Banyamulenge community had warned about this possibility.
69. IRIN Update No. 906 for the Great Lakes, April 18, 2000.
70. IRIN Update No. 910 for the Great Lakes, April 26, 2000.
71. IRIN Update No. 931 for the Great Lakes, May 25, 2000.
72. IRIN Update No. 940 for the Great Lakes Region, June 7, 2000.
73. PANA, “DR Congo: Eight Killed, Fifty Wounded in Bukavu, Grenade Attack,” August 28, 2000.
74. IRIN Update No. 982 for the Great Lakes, August 4, 2000.
75. IRIN Update No. 988 for the Great Lakes, August 14, 2000.
76. IRIN Update No. 1008 for the Great Lakes, September 11, 2000.
77. According to one report, the Congolese conflict had disintegrated into an anarchic mix of rebel groups and militia factions exploiting ethnic divisions and competing for control of the country’s vast mineral wealth. See Reuters, “Congo Fighting Leaves,” September 12, 2000.
78. Reports from the RCD indicated on December 15, 2000 that pro-government armed groups continued numerous attacks in South Kivu, terrorizing villages and using “rape as a weapon of war.” See IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup 50, December 9–15, 2000.
79. IRIN-CEA Weekly Roundup 38, September 16–22, 2000.
80. A leader of the pro-government Mayi-Mayi militia was quoted as saying that his fighters had also taken Ngongomeka in the Maniema province. The report gave no indication of when the two towns were captured, nor were any casualty figures given. See IRIN Update No. 1021 for the Great Lakes, September 28, 2000.
81. IRIN Update No. 1047 for the Great Lakes, November 7, 2000.
82. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup 49, December 2–8, 2000, and IRIN Update No. 1084 for the Great Lakes, January 3, 2001.
83. IRIN Update No. 1076 for the Great Lakes, December 14, 2000.
84. On July 28, 2000, in North Kivu, Interahamwe sought to exploit gold resources in the Walikale region. They used Congolese intermediaries who paid them in US dollars. The money was sent to sympathizers overseas, and they in turn purchased weapons in coordination with local Mayi-Mayi. Interahamwe and other militia

- were operating freely, playing off factional differences between rebels allied with Rwanda and those allied with Uganda. See IRIN, "RCD: Dossier spécial d'IRIN sur la milice de l'Interahamwe dans le Nord-Kivu," July 28, 2000, and Reuters, "Hutu and Militia Spread Terror in Congo's East," August 10, 2000.
85. IRIN Update No. 1006 for the Great Lakes, September 7, 2000.
 86. For two weeks Bukavu was also affected by the same strikes. But in Goma the situation was easing. See IRIN Update No. 860 for the Great Lakes, February 14, 2000.
 87. IRIN Update No. 867 for the Great Lakes, February 23, 2000.
 88. IRIN Update No. 872 for the Great Lakes, March 1, 2000.
 89. AFP, "Rebels Seeking to Create Mass Movement in Eastern DR Congo," April 20, 2000.
 90. IRIN Update No. 976 for the Great Lakes, July 27, 2000.
 91. IRIN Update No. 973 for the Great Lakes, July 24, 2000.
 92. IRIN Update No. 1062 for the Great Lakes, November 29, 2000.
 93. IRIN Update No. 728 for Central and Eastern Africa, August 4, 1999.
 94. The delegation remained in the Ugandan capital of Kampala and returned home on Sunday.
 95. IRIN Update No. 731 for Central and Eastern Africa, August 9, 1999.
 96. The partition followed the weekend of clashes between the Ugandans and members of the Rwandan-backed faction of the RCD. All residents agreed that the Rwandan forces played no part in the weekend battles. The effective partition of Kisangani did not seem to have affected daily life. Markets were full, shops were open, and residents could be seen chatting with the troops on both sides. The Ugandan and Rwandan soldiers also seemed to be on cordial terms despite the tension between their leaderships.
 97. Kigali admitted that troops of the two countries had clashed.
 98. There was no way for families to escape to the surrounding jungle. Wamba added that he did not have details of casualties but expected them to be "very high" among both civilian and soldiers.
 99. According to Wamba, "The Rwandese army set up a road block on the way from the airport and opened fire on Ugandan troops who then returned fire."
 100. IRIN Update No. 736 for Central and Eastern Africa, August 16, 1999.
 101. IRIN Update No. 740 for Central and Eastern Africa, August 20, 1999.
 102. IRIN Update No. 742 for Central and East Africa, August 24, 1999.
 103. On August 16, 1999, Kagame and Museveni were to meet in Museveni's holiday home in southwestern Uganda to try to end the crisis in Kisangani. The conflict must also be seen as a battle

- for the control of resources—gold, diamonds, and timber—that helped fund Rwanda’s and Uganda’s campaigns in Congo. See AFP, “Relations between Rwanda and Uganda Sour in DR Congo,” August 15, 1999, and *Mail & Guardian*, “Allies at War to Control Congo’s Fate,” August 17, 1999.
104. While the fighting had stopped, the propaganda war about who started the fighting continued. Ugandan military sources accused Burundi, which has always denied involvement in the DRC conflict, of having 4,000 troops in Kisangani.
 105. UN secretary general, “Secretary-General Very Concerned about Clashes since Last Weekend in Kisangani, DRC,” August 16, 1999.
 106. There was no fire from small arms or artillery in the city during the week and the central market opened up again, but tension remained high as the leadership dispute showed no sign of waning. See Reuters, “Fighting Trapped Civilians in Congolese City,” August 23, 1999.
 107. IRIN Update No. 751 for Central and Eastern Africa, September 6, 1999.
 108. The defeat of the UDPF by Rwandan forces (RPA) in Kisangani had shaken Museveni’s government and encouraged the armed opposition against Museveni since the army appears as vulnerable. See IRIN Update No. 752 for Central and Eastern Africa, September 7, 1999. The Kisangani clash could mark the beginning of a Rwandan offensive to drive out Ugandan forces from eastern DRC. In Kisangani, the population remained fearful of potential renewed clashes between the Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers, in spite of the recent troop movement out of the town. See IRIN Update No. 752 for Central and Eastern Africa, September 7, 1999.
 109. IRIN Update No. 803 for the Great Lakes, November 17, 1999.
 110. UN-DPI, “Security Council Condemns Rwanda-Uganda Fighting in Eastern DR of Congo,” June 6, 2000. Meanwhile, the town was still without electricity and water. The city’s two airports were the only supply routes for gasoline and food. See IRIN Update, No. 940 for the Great Lakes, June 7, 2000. On June 7, 2000, residents were still holed up in their homes and were left at the mercy of Ugandan and Rwandan soldiers. See PANA, “Situation in Kisangani still Confused,” June 7, 2000.
 111. UN-DPI, “Annan Renews Call to Rwanda, Uganda to Stop Fighting in Kisangani,” June 7, 2000.
 112. UN secretary general, “Secretary-General Says Fighting in Kisangani (DRC) Must Cease Immediately,” June 8, 2000, and UN secretary general, “Secretary-General Expressed Indignation and Shock at Continued Fighting in Kisangani,” June 10, 2000.
 113. PANA, “Salim Deplores Rwanda Fighting in Kisangani,” June 8, 2000.

114. PANA, "Aldo Ajello Condemns Resumption of Fighting in Kisangani," June 8, 2000.
115. PANA, "Uganda Declares Unilateral Ceasefire in Kisangani," June 8, 2000.
116. PANA, "Uganda Withdraws Troops from Kisangani," June 11, 2000.
117. UN Security Council, "Unilateral Withdrawal of the RPA from Kisangani," June 12, 2000.
118. Despite this declaration, UPDF officers expressed concern about the heavy presence of the RPA in town and were demanding that they withdraw to positions agreed upon in the demilitarization plan. See IRIN Update No. 944 for the Great Lakes, June 13, 2000.
119. IRIN Update No. 947 for the Great Lakes, June 16, 2000.
120. UN-DPI, "'Bulk' of Ugandan and Rwandan Troops Appear to Leave Kisangani, UN Reports," June 20, 2000.
121. IRIN Update No. 961 for the Great Lakes, July 6, 2000.
122. IRIN Update No. 965 for the Great Lakes, July 12, 2000.
123. These were false accusations according to Ilunga. See IRIN Update No. 779 for the Great Lakes, October 14, 1999.
124. IRIN, Weekly Roundup 42, October 16–22, 1999.
125. IRIN, "Democratic Republic of Congo: List of New RCD Officials," October 29, 1999.
126. IRIN Update No. 796 for the Great Lakes, November 8, 1999.
127. IRIN Update No. 870 for the Great Lakes Region, February 28, 2000.
128. IRIN Update No. 878 for the Great Lakes Region, March 9, 2000.
129. IRIN, "DRC: Rebel Leader Resigns, Admitting 'Errors,'" October 30, 2000.
130. On August 30, 1999, Rwandan radio announced that the prefecture of Kigali had been joined with the South Kivu province to allow a better cooperation in economic, cultural, and political activities, as well as to ensure better security. But the Congolese government radio depicted it as an attempted annexation of the South Kivu province by Rwanda. The mixing protocol (*jumelage*) was signed in Kigali by Norbert Basengezi Katintima, the governor of South Kivu, and the prefect of Kigali, Marc Kabandana. In the same vein, Wamba accused Rwanda of having amassed 3,000 troops for an upcoming attack on the Ugandan army in Kisangani. See IRIN Update No. 746 for Central and Eastern Africa, August 30, 1999.
131. IRIN Update, No. 713 for Central and Eastern, July 13, 1999.
132. IRIN Update, No. 732 for Central and Eastern Africa, August 10, 1999.
133. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup 37, September 11–17, 1999.
134. IRIN Update No. 772 for the Great Lakes, October 5, 1999. On November 19, 1999, there were also frictions between the RCD-ML

- and Uganda after the killing of the Ugandan colonel Reuben Ikondere. According to Mbusa Nyamwisi, twenty-five Congolese, including two at “ministerial” level, had been arrested in connection with the killing of Ikondere. Those arrested were the defense minister of the RCD-ML (for failing to protect the colonel) and the finance minister of the MLC. Nyamwisi said that Ikondere had been captured alive and was later speared and beaten by the Mayi-Mayi, contradicting earlier army reports that he had been shot dead in his hotel room. See IRIN Update No. 805 for the Great Lakes Region, November 19, 1999.
135. Despite frictions over the death of Colonel Ikondere, the RCD-ML had quietly strengthened its ties with the Ugandan military. April 2000 reports denied by the Ugandans claimed that 2,000 RCD-ML recruits were receiving military training from the UPDF at the Ugandan base of Singo. The UPDF was training the RCD-Bunia faction in anticipation of a time when it would have to withdraw its own troops from the DRC. RCD-ML officials were undertaking political orientation and administration courses as well as paramilitary training. See IRIN Update No. 903 for the Great Lakes, April 13, 2000.
 136. Meanwhile, a former member of Mobutu’s Zairian army, General Iluki, was set to take command of and reorganize the RCD-ML for Wamba. See IRIN Update No. 904 for the Great Lakes, April 14, 2000. It was not clear whether Mbusa Nyamwisi would attend the Kampala meeting, having called a General Assembly of the RCD-ML in the DRC.
 137. IRIN Update No. 916 for the Great Lakes, May 4, 2000.
 138. IRIN Update No. 977 for the Great Lakes, July 28, 2000. On August 1, 2000, some members of the splinter faction reportedly began surrendering to Ugandan troops. One seemingly pro-Wamba observer blamed the Ugandan rebels of NALU [National Army for the Liberation of Uganda], not differences in the leadership of the movement, for the unrest in Bunia. See IRIN Update No. 979 for the Great Lakes, August 1, 2000.
 139. IRIN Update No. 981 for the Great Lakes, August 3, 2000.
 140. IRIN Update No. 986 for the Great Lakes, August 10, 2000.
 141. The RCD-ML had been bedeviled by leadership struggles for two months, forcing the party leader to seek reinforcements from the UPDF to quell rebellion. See IRIN Update No. 1003 for the Great Lakes, September 4, 2000.
 142. Meanwhile, there were rumors of changes affecting the UPDF local military command and the presidential protection unit. The UPDF made changes without even consulting President Wamba, said the RCD-ML spokesperson, Kayikira Jean Ernest-Louis. The UPDF had ignored Wamba in its decision to remove Colonel Charles Angina, and even when it decided to change the entire Presidential Guard.

143. IRIN Update No. 811 for the Great Lakes, November 30, 1999.
144. Reuters, "Congo Rebel Factions to Meet in Uganda," December 16, 1999.
145. Sporadic fighting had begun on July 7, 1999, with the creation of the new "autonomous province." See IRIN Update No. 709, July 7, 1999.
146. Deutsche Presse-Agentur (DPA), "Fighting Rages in Northeast DR Congo," November 23, 1999. Two large measles epidemics between August and October resulted in mortality rates as high as 15 percent among displaced populations, and an MSF center near Bunia treated about 200 cholera cases from mid-September through October. Outbreaks of meningitis and the plague had also been reported, and malnutrition rates soared.
147. AFP, "Tribal Feud Leaves Hundreds Dead in Northeast DR Congo," October 11, 1999. On October 29, 1999, the ICRC has reopened its office in the northeast Bunia region following ongoing ethnic clashes between the Wahema and Walendu people, which, according to local sources, had claimed thousands of lives. The ICRC situated in the district of Ituri near the Ugandan border had been closed since August 1998. Many villages had been destroyed since July and the ICRC and MSF-Holland estimated that 100,000 people had fled their homes. Several thousand found refuge in the town of Bunia. The ICRC planned to assist 25,000 people in the coming weeks. See IRIN Update No. 790 for the Great Lakes, October 29, 1999.
148. IRIN Update No. 801 for the Great Lakes, November 15, 1999. The "rapporteur" of the RCD-Kisangani, Jacques Depelchin, said that although his group was in control of the Bunia region, it had not declared an "autonomous province" to create a power base there. See IRIN Update No. 726 for Central and Eastern Africa, July 30, 1999.
149. IRIN-CEA, "DRC: IRIN Focus on Hema-Lendu Conflict," November 15, 1999.
150. IRIN Update No. 817 for the Great Lakes, December 7, 1999. By mid-September, tens of thousands of people were displaced. ASADHO urged Ugandan troops and rebels of the RCD-ML to guarantee security for all inhabitants of the region. On December 10, 1999, sporadic bouts of Hema-Lendu fighting over land rights had caused an estimated 100,000 to 150,000 people to flee their homes, with some 85,000 being internally displaced in the area between Bunia and Djugu. The ICRC planned a large-scale assistance program for 50,000 people through the end of the year covering Bunia, Katoto, Pimbo, and Djugu. See IRIN Update No. 820 for the Great Lakes, December 10, 1999.
151. IRIN Update No. 827 for the Great Lakes, December 21, 1999. On MSF activities, see MSF, "New Team in Ituri, DRC," January 5, 2000.

152. IRIN Update No. 854 for the Great Lakes, February 4, 2000.
153. AFP, "DR Congo: Ethnic Conflict Leaves Thousand Dead, Displaced," February 4, 2000. According to the organization Justice-Plus, tensions between the two groups first turned violent when Hema pastoralists hired Ugandan soldiers to evict Lendus from their homes June 19, 2000.

7 SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN STRIFE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE FRONT LINES

1. Amnesty International, "DRC: Escalating Repression of Cities," January 10, 2000.
2. UN-DPI, Press Briefing by the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, DRC, November 5, 1999.
3. On May 31, 2000, many civilians in areas controlled by armed opposition and their backers were reported to have been killed during indiscriminate attacks or bombing by aircraft from Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Sudan.
4. Amnesty International, "DRC: Massacre of Civilians Continues Unabated in the East," January 17, 2000.
5. UNHCR, oral presentation of Roberto Garreton, special envoy for Human Rights in the DRC, March 29, 2000.
6. UN General Assembly, report of the secretary general on the Work of the Organization, August 31, 1999.
7. IRIN Update No. 767 for the Central and Eastern Africa, September 28, 1999.
8. AFP, "Kinshasa Accuses DRC Rebels of Massacre in Market," November 6, 1999.
9. IRIN Update No. 737 for Central and Eastern Africa, August 17, 1999.
10. HRW expressed particular concern that the headquarters of the RCD-Kisangani faction was located at the Hotel Wagenia, which was in the center of town, creating a deadly crossfire in a heavily populated zone.
11. IRIN-CEA Update No. 739, August 19, 1999.
12. MSF, "Civilian Population in DRC Under Fire," May 7, 2000.
13. AFP, "At Least Sixteen Dead in Fighting in Northeast DRC Town According to UN," June 7, 2000. As of June 8, 2000, there was no electricity in Kisangani. The service had been interrupted when fighting broke out.
14. IRIN Update No. 954 for the Great Lakes, June 27, 2000.
15. IRIN-CEA Update No. 965 for the Great Lakes, July 12, 2000.
16. AFP, "Almost 13,000 People Flee DRC for Central Africa," July 14, 1999.
17. USIA, "Central African Republic Asks UN for Help with Congo Refugees," July 20, 1999.

18. Reuters, "Thousands of Refugees Flee North of Kabila's Congo," July 22, 1999.
19. UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: Refugees from the DRC and Congo-Brazzaville," July 23, 1999.
20. UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: Rwanda, DR Congo," August 8, 2000.
21. AFP, "Central African Republic Becomes Haven for DR Congo Refugees," September 4, 2000.
22. IRIN-CEA, "CAR: Insecurity and Lack of Shelter for Refugees," November 23, 2000.
23. PANA, "Some 1,000 Civilians Seek Refugee in Northern DRC," August 11, 1999.
24. AFP, "More than 2,000 Flee DRC to Northern Congo," August 17, 1999.
25. On July 4, 2000, the UNHCR launched a relief operation along the remote and highly dangerous frontier between the two Congos.
26. Most of the refugees fleeing from the DRC to ROC refer to the rebel forces as "liberator" and say they were fleeing alleged violence and harassment by retreating government troops. See AFP, "Brazzaville Asks for Aid for DRC Refugees," February 17, 2000.
27. UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: DRC/Congo, North Caucasus, Timor, Kosovo," February 18, 2000.
28. PANA, "Brazzaville Reports New Wave of Refugees from DRC," September 27, 2000.
29. UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: DRC, Eritrea, Timor, Angola," July 4, 2000.
30. UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: Sudan, Eritrea, the Congos," August 1, 2000.
31. Traffic on the river, the only way to reach the refugees has been at a standstill due to fighting and insecurity along the DRC side. See UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: Eritrea/Sudan, Congo, Angola/DR Congo," July 25, 2000.
32. PANA, "Brazzaville Will Pay a Heavy Price Because of the DRC War," October 4, 2000.
33. IRIN-CEA, DR Congo: IRIN Dispatch, October 28, 2000.
34. PANA, "600 million Francs Allocated for Refugees from Northern Congo," October 14, 2000.
35. UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: South America/Mercosur Declaration on the Congos," November 17, 2000.
36. IFRC, Zambia: Refugees from the DRC Situation Report No. 2, September 16, 1999.
37. No serious epidemic had broken out thus far. See Africa News Service (ANS), "Zambia: Refugee Wave Breeds Fear," July 20, 1999.
38. For this reason, refugee movements into the refugee camp from spontaneous settlements continued at a rate of up to 300 a week, taking the total population of the Mwange camp to 25,000.

39. AFP, "More DR Congo Soldiers, Civilians Flee into Zambia, Says UNHCR," November 16, 2000.
40. PANA, "ID Cards for Refugees in Zambia," November 10, 2000.
41. IRIN-SA, "Zambia: UNHCR Expecting More Refugees and Soldiers from DRC," November 21, 2000.
42. IRIN-SA, "Zambia: More Congolese Refugees and Troops Cross into Zambia," December 5, 2000.
43. IRIN-SA Weekly Roundup No. 49, December 2–8, 2000.
44. IFRC, "Southern Africa: Humanitarian Assistance Special Focus on Zambia: Refugees from DR Congo Situation Report," No. 6, December 14, 2000.
45. IRIN-SA, Weekly Roundup No. 50, December 9–15, 2000.
46. UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: Tanzania," July 30, 1999.
47. IFRC, "Refugee Pressures in Tanzania," July 19, 1999.
48. IFRC, "Refugee Camp under Pressure in Tanzania," July 22, 1999.
49. IFRC, "Tanzania: Assistance to Congolese and Burundian Refugees," Situation Report No. 1, July 26, 1999.
50. IRIN-CEA, "Tanzania: 'Incredible pressure' on Refugee Operations," July 28, 1999.
51. AFP, "Red Cross to Open New Camp for DR Congo Refugees in Tanzania," August 3, 1999.
52. IFRC, "Tanzania: Influx of DRC Refugees Situation Report," No. 1, December 1, 1999.
53. IRIN Update No. 830 for the Great Lakes, December 28, 1999.
54. By late January 2000, 190 Burundians, 50 Congolese, and 6 Rwandans were in custody in Kigoma's regional prisons. From 1994 to 1999, there had been 465 criminal incidents in the region involving refugees. The region had seen a significant increase of weapons brought in unlawfully by the refugees between January 1994 and December 1999. See Xinhua, "Tanzanian Prisons Congested with Refugee Inmates," January 23, 2000.
55. In February 2000, some refugees arriving from Uvira and Fizi claimed that heavy fighting was again raging and rebel forces were looting villages. Much of the local population was still hiding in the forest. See UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: North Caucasus, Pakistan/Afghanistan, Tanzania/Burundi, Hong Kong, Laos," February 25, 2000.
56. AFP, "Cholera Kills Fourteen in Western Tanzania," February 26, 2000.
57. IRIN-SA, Weekly Roundup No. 19, May 6–12, 2000.
58. Reuters, "Tanzania Refugees Have Food Rations Slashed," July 20, 2000.
59. PANA, "Refugees Scared by Proposed Cutback in Food Rations," July 23, 2000.
60. UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: Food Shortages Affecting Refugees, Afghan, Repatriation, New Statistical Overview," August 18, 2000.

61. IFRC, "New Camp Opens for Congolese Refugees in Tanzania," October 17, 2000.
62. This group sought to avoid the well-established refugee camps in Tanzania.
63. IRIN-SA, "Mozambique Refugee Influx from Congo and the Great Lakes," February 2, 2000.
64. AFP, "No Respite at the End of a Long Road for Congolese Refugees in South Africa," September 25, 1999.
65. PANA, "Malawi Braces Itself for More DRC Refugees," June 12, 2000.
66. IFRC, "Uganda: Support for Refugees, Disaster Preparedness, and Response Situation," Report No. 2, December 29, 1999.
67. AFP, "Hundreds Flee Fighting in Eastern DRC," January 6, 2001.
68. IRIN-CEA, DRC: Les organisations humanitaires se hatent d'évaluer la situation en Ituri, January 15, 2001.
69. AFP, "Floods Intensify Congo Fighting," December 3, 1999.
70. OCHA, "Humanitarian Situation in the DRC," November 3–9, 2000.
71. WFP, "WFP Appeals for Safe and Unimpeded Access in the DRC," January 24, 2000.
72. Action Against Hunger (AAH), "DRC: Tens of Thousands of Children Face Death by Starvation," February 14, 2000.
73. In South Kivu in May and June 1999, recurrent hostilities prevented IDPs from returning to their home communities. Once again, significant groups of the population, primarily residents of coastal villages and the Moyen Plateau, were on the move. At the same time, an evaluation exercise conducted by ICRC in Luwinja and Kaziba revealed that IDPs earlier identified in these area (approximately 10,000) had returned. It became obvious that the numeric evaluation of IDP communities in South Kivu needed to be updated with more frequency given the very high mobility of the displaced community. By June 1999, the UN and Red Cross were in the process of developing appropriate strategies to assist those IDPs willing to return. To date some 10,000 IDPs registered with the provincial authorities for return. Based on preliminary data, a figure of 180,000 identified IDPs was put forward for planning purposes.
74. ICRC Update No. 99/02: ICRC Activities in the DRC, December 9, 1999.
75. AFP, "More than 100,000 Still Homeless in Eastern DRC, Says UN," February 8, 2000.
76. WFP, Emergency Report No. 10, 2000.
77. IRC, "Thousands Flee Attacks in the DRC," February 14, 2000.
78. AFP, "90,000 People Displaced by War in Western DRC: Civil Society Group," June 26, 2000.
79. IRIN Update No. 968 for the Great Lakes, July 17, 2000.

80. ICRC, "DR Congo: New Influx of Displaced People near Goma," April 20, 2000.
81. OCHA, *DRC Monthly Humanitarian Bulletin*, May–June 2000.
82. WFP, Emergency Report No. 43, 2000.
83. AFP, "More than One Million Displaced in Eastern DRC, Says UN," November 9, 2000.
84. AFP, "Civilians Return to Northern DRC Town Amid Lull in Fighting," June 12, 2000.
85. IRIN Update No. 944 for the Great Lakes, June 13, 2000.
86. ICRC, "DRC: ICRC Delivers Aid to Kisangani," June 13, 2000.
87. IRIN-CEA Update No. 748, September 1, 1999.
88. MSF, "Epidemic Strikes District in Democratic Republic of Congo," September 2, 1999.
89. Marek Enterprise, "Major Humanitarian Catastrophe in Ituri Region of DRC's Orientale Province," November 4, 1999.
90. On November 30, 1999, the world's second largest river was feeding a flood that would "last until January and probably surpass" two other major floods recorded in the twentieth century. See AFP, "Flooding Forces Thousand Out of Homes in DRC Capital," November 30, 1999.
91. AFP, "Congo Floods Drive Kinshasa Residents to Rooftops," December 3, 1999. See also AFP, "45,000 Kinshasa Residents Temporarily Re-housed," December 5, 1999.
92. Reuters, "Serious Food Shortages in East Africa, FAO Says," December 15, 1999.
93. There had been reports of widespread violations of humanitarian law, including mass killing, bombing, forced displacements, and deliberate targeting of civilians. See IRIN Update No. 971 for the Great Lakes, July 20, 2000.
94. IRIN-CEA Update No. 756, September 13, 1999.
95. IRIN-CEA Update No. 757, September 14, 1999.
96. OCHA, *DRC Monthly Humanitarian Bulletin*, August 18–September 15, 1999.
97. AFP, "Peace as Plundering Continues," August 17, 2000.
98. The companies nonetheless reportedly tried to list in Dublin and Canada in a further test of market sentiment toward conflict gems.
99. IRIN-SA, "Africa: IRIN Focus on Conflict Diamonds," June 28, 2000.
100. IRIN Update No. 811 for the Great Lakes, November 29, 1999.
101. IRIN-CEA Update No. 770, October 1, 1999.
102. IRIN Update No. 780 for the Great Lakes, October 15, 1999.
103. IRIN Update No. 789 for the Great Lakes, October 28, 1999.
104. IRIN Update No. 822 for the Great Lakes, December 14, 1999.
105. OCHA, *DRC Monthly Humanitarian Bulletin*, June 15–July 15, 1999.

106. OCHA, *DRC Monthly Humanitarian Bulletin*, May–June 2000, July 14, 2000.
107. A World Bank-IMF-UNDP joint assessment took place from November 6 through 13, 2000. The members of this mission announced during a debriefing on November 13 that the contacts made with authorities and negotiations held with key ministry officials prepared the ground for the resumption of DRC-WB-IMF cooperation. A preliminary agreement was reached on a medium-term program of over US\$400 million for rehabilitation projects. See OCHA, *DRC Monthly Humanitarian Bulletin*, October 1 to November 15, 1999.
108. IRIN Update No. 1063 for the Great Lakes, November 30, 2000.
109. IRIN Update No. 973 for the Great Lakes, July 24, 2000.
110. OCHA, *DRC Monthly Humanitarian Bulletin*, July 17–August 17, 1999.
111. IRIN Update No. 847 for the Great Lakes, January 24, 2000.
112. World Bank Group, “Greed for Diamond and Other ‘Lootable’ Commodities Fuels Civil Wars,” June 15, 2000.
113. UN-DPI, Press Conference on the Profit Agenda in Civil Conflicts, May 12, 2000.
114. Global Witness, “Global Witness Conflict Diamond Report,” June 20, 2000.
115. *Mail & Guardian*, “Diamonds No Longer a Guerilla’s Best Friend,” March 28, 2000.
116. USIA, “State Department Fact Sheet on Conflict Diamonds,” May 24, 2000.
117. PANA, “Group of Experts Appointed to Exam the Illicit Exploitation of Resources in the DRC,” August 16, 2000.
118. President Museveni did so while addressing the Ugandan parliament, saying that there was no truth in the rumors that Uganda was “somehow connected with the plundering and looting of the Congolese resources.” See IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup No. 22, May 27–June 2, 2000.
119. IRIN Update No. 1051 for the Great Lakes, November 13, 2000.
120. UN Security Council, Interim Report of the UN Expert Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of DRC, December 20, 2000.
121. IRIN Update No. 972 for the Great Lakes, July 21, 2000.
122. IRIN-CEA Update No. 779 for the Great Lakes, October 14, 1999.
123. MSF, “War in Congo Causes Alarming Malnutrition and Mortality,” January 24, 2000.
124. FAO/Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), “Food Crops and Shortages in the DRC,” November 8, 2000.
125. PANA, “RDC: Rehabilitation of Rural Water Works,” November 1, 2000.

126. AFP, "Report on Grave Food Shortages in Kabinda, DRC," September 18, 1999.
127. WFP, "Appeals for Immediate Food Aid as Number of Victims in War-Torn Congo," January 12, 2001.
128. Food for the Hungry International, "Help for Democratic Republic of the Congo," December 2, 1999.
129. U.S. Fund for UNICEF, DRC Situation Report, August 25, 2000.
130. AFP, "DRC War Leaves Hundreds of Thousands Starving According to UN," October 11, 1999.
131. IRIN-CEA Update No. 755, September 10, 1999.
132. OCHA, UN humanitarian coordinator for the DRC, "UN Humanitarian Missions behind the Ceasefire Line," October 10, 1999.
133. AFP, "WFP Delivery of Food to War-Ravaged DRC City," June 12, 2000.
134. IRIN-CEA Update No. 744, August 16, 1999.
135. WHO, "Health Situation in Kisangani, DRC," June 16, 2000.
136. IRIN Update No. 758 for Central and Eastern Africa, September 15, 1999.
137. IRIN Update No. 812 for the Great Lakes, November 30, 1999.
138. See WHO, "Viral Hemorrhagic Marburg Fever in 30-Year-Old Miner in DRC," February 11, 2000.
139. PANA, "AIDS Causes 160,000 Deaths in Eastern DRC," January 10, 2001.
140. PANA, "Over 14 Million DRC Citizens Face Deficiency," May 16, 2000.
141. IRC, Eastern DRC Mortality Study, May 9, 2000.
142. IRIN Update No. 942 for the Great Lakes, June 9, 2000.

8 KABILA: A PRISONER OF HIMSELF

1. The UN officials were trying to ascertain whether Kabila had made it out of the country to attend the France-Africa summit in the Cameroonian capital of Yaounde. See AFP, "UN Reports Fighting around Kabila's Palace; Kinshasa Now Calm," January 16, 2001.
2. AFP, "DRC Closes Off Borders after Apparent Coup Bid," January 16, 2001.
3. Government of France, "République Démocratique du Congo: Déclaration du porte parole du Quai d'Orsay," January 17, 2001.
4. UN-DPI, "Capital of DR of Congo is Calm amid Reports of Kabila's Death," January 17, 2001.
5. AFP, "Urgent: Minister Says Kabila Dead, Shot by Head of Presidential Guard," January 17, 2001.
6. On January 18, 2001, Belgium did not want to be drawn into a quarrel with the DRC over the fate of President Kabila but maintained

- that the president died after Tuesday's shooting incident around the presidential palace.
7. IRIN-CEA, "Belgium Confirms Joseph Kabila 'Alive and Well,'" January 18, 2001.
 8. In Kabinda in Kasai Oriental, only 3 kilometers separated RCD rebels and Zimbabwean troops and, as one observer noted, "Anything could happen at any time."
 9. IRIN-CEA, "DRC: Provinces Calm but Alert," January 18, 2001.
 10. In its announcement, the government also signaled its intention to continue the president's hard-line position toward the war against the rebels. As the announcement was being made, rebel leader Jean-Pierre Bemba said that their positions in the north were being bombed by government forces.
 11. IRIN-WA, "DRC-Africa: Franco-African Summit Observes Minute of Silence for Kabila," January 18, 2001.
 12. AFP, "OAU Conflict Body to Hold Emergency Meeting on DRC," January 19, 2001.
 13. Belgium sent two security teams into Gabon to prepare to evacuate 2,500 Belgian citizens in the DRC. See IRIN-CEA, "DRC: Kabila's Opponents Stress Support for Lusaka Accord," January 17, 2001.
 14. AFP, "Belgian PM to Discuss with UN's Annan in Sweden," January 29, 2001.
 15. UN-DPI, "DRC: New Leader Pledges to Work with UN Mission toward Peace," January 25, 2001.
 16. AFP, "Kabila's Death Could Be a Chance to Speed Up Peace Process, EU Envoy Says," January 31, 2001.
 17. UN-DPI, "Security Council Members Condemn Kabila's Killing and Backs Annan's Call for Peace," January 18, 2001.
 18. IRIN-CEA, "DRC: Belgium Warns against 'Contradictory' Information," January 17, 2001.
 19. AFP, "Uneasy Calm in Kinshasa Following Shooting of Kabila," January 17, 2001.
 20. IRIN-CEA, "DRC: Kinshasa Tense as Kabila Lies in State," January 22, 2001.
 21. Norimitsu Onishi, "Congo Leader Reportedly Dead after Being Shot by Bodyguard," *New York Times*, January 17, 2001.
 22. IRIN-CEA, "DRC: Kabila's Rule, as His End, Marked by Confusion," January 18, 2001.
 23. IRIN Update No. 1094 for the Great Lakes, January 17, 2001.
 24. IRIN-CEA, "DRC-Zimbabwe: No Evidence that Kabila Is Alive," January 17, 2001.
 25. Danna Harman, "Herculean Task for Congo Leader," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 25, 2001.
 26. Karl Vick, "Ascendant Son in Congo," *Washington Post*, Jan. 25, 2001, p. A12. Some observers said that some of these troubling

- connections actually might be helpful when negotiating with neighboring countries.
27. Because of this need for continuity, and depending on its relations with the DRC war allies Angola and Zimbabwe, there was fear that the war would continue with greater vigor. See IRIN-CEA, "DRC: IRIN Focus on Post-Kabila Era," January 18, 2001.
 28. IRIN-CEA, "DRC: Region Reacts to Kinshasa Void," January 18, 2001.
 29. Nonetheless, the Belgian foreign minister, Louis Miche, who went to talk with Kabila after arriving for the funeral, told reporters that he wanted to see more democracy and moves toward ending the war. He called for the release of prisoners and the acceptance of a facilitator for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.
 30. IRIN Update No. 1098 for the Great Lakes Region, January 23, 2001.
 31. One day before the ceremony, Joseph Kabila told UN special representative for the DRC, Kamel Morjane, that he was prepared to "work closely" with the UN mission in the DRC (the MONUC) in order to achieve peace. The meeting between the two men in Kinshasa was the second in the week since the assassination and was described as positive in tone and content.
 32. AFP, "DRC Officially Confirms Kabila Is Dead," January 18, 2001.
 33. It was not clear whether the other foreign powers with a presence in the Congo wanted peace. Rwanda was not going to leave until it felt its borders were secure. Uganda was in the midst of a presidential election and was unlikely to leave the DRC without evidence that the war had secured some concrete benefits. Rwanda and Uganda were largely believed to be paying for their war efforts through the exploitation of Congolese diamond, coffee, and gold resources. In Zimbabwe, Mugabe faced growing opposition to his involvement in the DRC. But the war had enriched top officers in his military who had access to Congo's diamond mines.
 34. IRIN Update No. 1117 for the Great Lakes, February 19, 2001.
 35. IRIN Update No. 1110 for the Great Lakes, February 8, 2001.
 36. As of March 7, 2001, Ketumile Masire was expected in Kinshasa on March 13 to prepare for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. At the same time, the RCD-Goma announced that it would be ready by March 15 to withdraw the mandated 15 kilometers from its positions at the time. See IRIN Update No. 1129 for the Great Lakes, March 7, 2001.
 37. IRIN Update No. 1185 for the Great Lakes, May 24, 2001.
 38. Reuters, "DRC: Kabila Meets Namibian Ally on War, Peace," February 22, 2001.
 39. The news bulletin said that Kabila was "conscious of the socio-economic situation prevailing in the country, and considers it

- disturbing.” Kabila announced that an audit would be conducted into public enterprises and companies, and that the provincial governments would be required to examine their fiscal records from January 2001 to the present time.
40. All of these people were closer in orientation to Zimbabwe rather than Angola.
 41. IRIN-CEA, “DRC: New Government List,” April 16, 2001.
 42. On January 19, 2001, Major-General Joseph Kabila, still the interim leader, met the UN special representative, Kamel Morjane, in Kinshasa. Kabila told him that the DRC government wished to bolster its cooperation with the UN and counted on the MONUC for support “in carrying out its program.” Kabila said he attached great importance to implementing Security Council resolutions on the DRC, including those concerning the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.
 43. IRIN Update No. 1103 for the Great Lakes, January 30, 2001.
 44. AFP, “DRC’s Kabila and Rwanda’s Kagame Meet, Powell Offers U.S. Good Will,” February 1, 2001.
 45. Norimitsu Onishi and Ian Fisher, “New President Inherits a Paralyzed Congo,” *New York Times*, February 1, 2001.
 46. UN-DPI, “Now Is the Time to Move the DRC Peace Process Forward, Annan Says,” February 2, 2001.
 47. PANA, “Kabila Promises to Hold Dialogue with Rebel Groups,” February 1, 2001.
 48. IRIN Update No. 1104 for the Great Lakes, January 31, 2001.
 49. IRIN Update No. 1105 for the Great Lakes, February 1, 2001.
 50. AFP, “Belgian FM Asks New DR Congo Leader for ‘Signs of Opening,’” January 23, 2001.
 51. AFP, “Kabila to Meet EU Chief Prodi during Saturday Stop in Brussels,” February 2, 2001.
 52. AFP, “EU Prepared to Rethink Aid to DRC,” February 26, 2001.
 53. European Union, “Meeting between President Prodi and President Kabila,” March 16, 2001.
 54. AFP, “Kabila Meets Blair, Cook in London on DRC Peace,” March 13, 2001.
 55. IRIN Update No. 1139 for the Great Lakes, March 21, 2001.
 56. IRIN Update No. 1136 for the Great Lakes, March 16, 2001.
 57. PANA, “Kabila Sends Message to Angolan President,” February 7, 2001.
 58. IRIN Update No. 1165 for the Great Lakes, April 26, 2001.
 59. IRIN Update No. 1110 for the Great Lakes, February 8, 2001.
 60. IRIN Update No. 1154 for the Great Lakes, April 11, 2001.
 61. IRIN Update No. 1156 for the Great Lakes, April 13, 2001.
 62. IRIN Update No. 1245 for the Great Lakes, August 16, 2001.

63. Kabila was waiting impatiently for the opening of a preconference meeting on the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, which was to begin in Gaborone in Botswana.
64. IRIN Update No. 1246 for the Great Lakes, August 17, 2001.
65. AFP, "Kabila Meets Mandela, Asks for South Africa's Support," August 30, 2001.
66. PANA, "OAU Appeals for International Support in DRC," January 30, 2001.
67. PANA, "Salim Urges World to Help Kabila Restore Peace," May 13, 2001.
68. IRIN-SA, "South Africa: Deputy President Visits Great Lakes," February 6, 2001.
69. IRIN-SA, "Southern Africa: IRIN News Briefs," February 7, 2001.
70. Reuters, "Rwanda Refuses to Attend Congo Summit in Lusaka," February 12, 2001.
71. AFP, "DR Congo Peace Summit Scheduled for Thursday in Lusaka," February 13, 2001.
72. AFP, "New DRC Peace Talks to Open with Three Leaders Absent," February 15, 2001.
73. AFP, "Lusaka Summit Offers New Hopes for Peace in DR Congo," February 16, 2001.
74. IRIN Update No. 1093 for the Great Lakes, January 16, 2001.
75. IRIN Update No. 1102 for the Great Lakes, January 29, 2001.
76. IRIN Update No. 1197 for the Great Lakes, June 11, 2001.
77. Under the merger, Bemba became the president of the FLC and commander of the armed forces of the rebel group. His first vice president would be Mbusa Nyamwisi. Wamba, whose leadership of the RCD-ML was being contested by Mbusa, refused to sign the merger agreement.
78. IRIN Update No. 1246 for the Great Lakes, August 17, 2001. The RCD-ML, whose leadership was contested between Wamba and Mbusa, claimed control of four provinces: Ituri, Haut-Uele, Bas-Uele, and North Kivu. Its headquarters was in Bunia, the capital of the Ituri province. Under the merger, the FLC now controlled five huge provinces: Equateur, Ituri, Haut-Uele, Bas-Uele, and North Kivu. The capital of Haut-Uele was Isiro, that of Bas-Uele was Buta, while that of North Kivu was Beni. Under the FLC Bemba had shifted his base from Gbadolite to Beni but had been facing growing opposition from a section of the population. Residents claimed that the FLC administration in the region had led to a decline in the social, economic, and political stability in the area.
79. IRIN Update No. 1250 for the Great Lakes, August 23, 2001.
80. AFP, "Uganda and Rwanda to Mend Fences at Summit," March 20, 2001.
81. AFP, "Uganda and Rwanda Pledge to Mend Fences," July 6, 2001.

9 UPHEAVAL IN JOSEPH KABILA'S CONGO

1. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup No. 58, February 3–9, 2001.
2. UN secretary general, "Moment of Opportunity 'Must Be Seized' by DRC, Says Secretary-General in Statement to Security Council," February 2, 2001. In a report that followed, Annan proposed the elements of revised concept of operations enabling the MONUC to deploy more fully in support of the disengagement plan. He asked the Security Council to consider this concept carefully and adopt it, adding, "I look forward to the early withdrawal of all foreign forces from the DRC, as provided for by the Lusaka agreement. In future phases of its operations—with the approval of the Security Council—the MONUC will be ready to deploy to assist in this important objective. The commitment to peace we have observed on the part of the new government is welcome for many reasons. A cessation of hostilities would permit humanitarian agencies to gain access to populations in need. Greater attention could be paid to human rights and the rights of children, including child soldiers, once the fighting has stopped. Finally, it is only right for me to wish President Kabila every success."
3. UN-DPI, "DRC: UN Peacekeeping Plans Revised to Seize Change for Peace," February 12, 2001.
4. UN-DPI, press briefing by under secretary general for peacekeeping, February 13, 2001.
5. AFP, "UN Team in Kinshasa to Assess Plans for Peacekeeping Force," February 14, 2001.
6. UN Security Council, "S.C. Demands Disengagement in DRC; Urges Adoption of Complete Withdrawal Plans by May 15," February 22, 2001.
7. UN-DPI, "DRC: UN Team Heads to Pweto to Monitor Pullout of Rwandan Troops," February 23, 2001.
8. U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Urges Withdrawal of Foreign Forces from Congo," March 15, 2001.
9. AFP, "UN Peacekeepers Set to Deploy in Rebel-Held Parts of DRC," March 18, 2001.
10. IRIN-CEA, DRC: Kabinda Emerges from Siege, April 26, 2001.
11. IRIN Update No. 1142 for the Great Lakes, March 26, 2001.
12. PANA, "Some Congolese Have Doubts about the Rwandan Pullout from the DRC," March 22, 2001.
13. UN-DPI, "Security Council Urges Forces in the DR of Congo to Respect the Disengagement Schedule," March 30, 2001.
14. IRIN Update, No. 1219 for the Great Lakes, July 11, 2001.
15. IRIN Update, No. 1219 for the Great Lakes, July 11, 2001.
16. AFP, "Ugandan-Backed Rebels Block Deployment of UN Observers in DRC," April 29, 2001.
17. AFP, "Western Ambassadors in 'Frank' Talks with DR Congo Rebel Leaders," April 1, 2001.

18. IRIN Update No. 1155 for the Great Lakes, April 12, 2001.
19. IRIN-SA, "DRC-Southern Africa: Progress on Peace Process," May 23, 2001.
20. IRIN Update No. 73 for the Great Lakes, May 25, 2001.
21. UN Security Council, press statement by Security Council president on DRC, July 6, 2001.
22. IRIN Update No. 1218 for the Great Lakes Region, July 10, 2001.
23. IRIN Update No. 1226 for the Great Lakes, July 20, 2001.
24. AFP, "DR Congo Government Calls on UN to Remove Rebel Troops," July 18, 2001.
25. AFP, "UN Says Rebels Continue to Run Civilian Administration of DR Congo City," June 13, 2001.
26. But Jean-David Levitte had expressed his disapproval with the MONUC's decision. See IRIN Update No. 77 for the Great Lakes, June 22, 2001.
27. AFP, "UN Special Envoy in DRC Rebel Headquarters," July 15, 2001.
28. IRIN Update No. 1225 for the Great Lakes, July 19, 2001.
29. AFP, "Pressure Mounts on DRC Rebels to Pull Troops out of Kisangani," August 1, 2001.
30. AFP, "Encouraging Signs in DR Congo: Troops Pull Out," March 27, 2001.
31. Chimonyo accused the RCD-Goma of not abiding with the disengagement plan and urged the UN to verify the movement of the rebel forces on the eastern front. See IRIN Update No. 1193 for the Great Lakes, June 5, 2001.
32. AFP, "First UN Troops to Deploy in Eastern DR Congo, Says Mission Chief," March 28, 2001.
33. AFP, "UN Ready to Deploy in Key Congolese Town after Rwandan Withdrawal," February 7, 2001.
34. PANA, "Kabila Hopeful Kagame Will Join Peace Process," February 16, 2001.
35. UN-DPI, "DR of Congo: First 1,500 UN Troops To Be Deployed before Month's End," March 7, 2001.
36. AFP, "First UN Contingent Starts Deploying in Eastern DR Congo," March 29, 2001.
37. AFP, "Second Unit of Uruguayan UN Blue Helmets Deploys in DR Congo," March 31, 2001.
38. IRIN Update No. 1111 for the Great Lakes, February 9, 2001.
39. IRIN Update No. 1150 for the Great Lakes, April 5, 2001.
40. IRIN Update for the Great Lakes, April 3, 2001.
41. IRIN-SA Weekly Roundup No. 13, March 31–April 6, 2001.
42. PANA, "DR Congo: Over Sixty South African Soldiers Deployed," May 4, 2001.
43. On June 22, 2001, the council also saluted the reopening of traffic on the Congo and Ubangui Rivers, a resumption that reestablished economic links between Kinshasa, Mbandaka, and Kisangani.

44. UN-DPI, "Annan Sees Hopeful Signs on DRC, But Says Challenges Remain," May 11, 2001.
45. AFP, "Uganda to Pull Out of DR Congo and Peace Process, Says Museveni," April 29, 2001.
46. "Moves to End Congo Conflict," *Mail & Guardian*, May 22, 2001. But no one yet dared to say much about the practicality of installing a full-fledged peacekeeping force that would almost certainly be needed to fill the vacuum left when the foreign soldiers pull out.
47. PANA, "DR Congo: Young Kabila Urges Army to Recapture Rebel-Held Territory," January 20, 2001.
48. IRIN-SA, IRIN News Briefs, January 23, 2001.
49. IRIN Update No. 1236 for the Great Lakes, August 3, 2001.
50. IRIN Update No. 1124 for the Great Lakes, February 28, 2001.
51. AFP, "Uganda to Pull Out of DR Congo and Peace Process, Says Museveni," April 29, 2001.
52. UN-DPI, "Uganda's Pullout from Lusaka Accord 'Not Necessarily a Setback,' Says Annan," April 30, 2001.
53. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup No. 71, May 5–11, 2001, and IRIN Update No. 1215 for the Great Lakes, July 5, 2001.
54. On July 11, the Sixty-fifth Battalion withdrew from the northeastern town of Bafwasende. See IRIN, Weekly Roundup No. 76, June 9–15, 2001.
55. Reuters, "Rwanda Completes Withdrawal of Congo Battalion," March 22, 2001.
56. PANA, "Kagame Refuses to Withdraw Troops from DR Congo," April 9, 2001.
57. IRIN-SA, "Zimbabwe in DRC: Harare to Withdraw 5,000 Troops," April 5, 2001.
58. IRIN-SA, "Southern Africa: IRIN News Briefs," June 21, 2001.
59. AFP, "Angolan Sending Reinforcement to DR Congo," January 22, 2001.
60. AFP, "Angola's Parliament to Debate Troops' Presence in DR Congo," April 6, 2001.
61. Government of Angola, "FAA Soldiers Will Leave Congo in Due Time," April 11, 2001.
62. IRIN-SA, IRIN News Briefs, April 12, 2001.
63. IRIN-SA, IRIN News Briefs, January 25, 2001.
64. The ministers were also to receive reports from various delegations on how the troop disengagement and redeployment exercise that ended on March 29 had proceeded and then look at the next stage of the peace process. See AFP, "DR Congo Combatants Discuss Foreign Troop Withdrawal," April 6, 2001.
65. IRIN-SA, "Zimbabwe-DRC: Plan for Withdrawal of Foreign Forces," April 9, 2001.
66. AFP, "South African Deputy President Visits DR Congo," July 17, 2001.

67. UN Security Council, "Briefing by Special Representative for DRC Calls on All Parties to Cooperate Fully with MONUC," July 24, 2001.
68. International Crisis Group, "No Peace without Disarmament in the Congo," June 12, 2001.
69. AFP, "DRC Summit Participants Agree on Disarming Rwandan Hutus, Say Rebels," February 16, 2001.
70. IRIN Update No. 1122 for the Great Lakes, February 26, 2001.
71. UN-DPI, "Security Council Discusses Report on Next Phase of UN Mission in DRC," June 12, 2001.
72. Reuters, "African Ministers Discuss Congo Peace Plan," May 21, 2001.
73. UN Security Council, Letter from Zambia to the UN Security Council, May 29, 2001.
74. Reuters, "Annan in Talks to Disarm Congo Militia," July 10, 2001.
75. UK Department of International Development, "Clare Short Announces 'Quick Start' Program to Help Carry Forward the Peace Process in the DRC," August 10, 2001.
76. Progress on the peace process appeared to have caused a movement of Hutu armed groups toward the eastern Congo and Burundi, leading to an escalation of violence in the area. If nothing was done, the war will likely resume either through an explosion in the Kivus or a reversal of the momentum on disengagement.
77. PANA, "Rwandan Army Hunts Down Hutu Rebels," May 22, 2001.
78. IRIN Update No. 1114 for the Great Lakes, February 14, 2001. The group said it should be included in all national and regional discussions on all of the DRC issues, including the Lusaka peace process. It also denied that its troops were fighting alongside DRC government forces.
79. PANA, "Fighting Raging in Eastern DRC," February 20, 2001.
80. AFP, "Heavy Fighting in Rwanda after Insurgents Enter from DR Congo," May 22, 2001.
81. IRIN-CEA, "Peace in Congo May Prolong War in Burundi," April 18, 2001.
82. IRIN Update No. 1189 for the Great Lakes, May 30, 2001. Azarias said the RCD would not go along with a "false ceasefire on the frontline while the negative forces conduct a war pretty much in all parts of the east."
83. IRIN Update No. 58 for Central and Eastern Africa, February 9, 2001.
84. Rebel leaders and Rwandan army officers confirmed to PANA that weapons and ammunition provided by the Kinshasa government were still reaching the Mayi-Mayi and their allies in the Rwandan and Burundian rebellion. Talking to the newsmen in Bukavu, Norbert Basingizi Katintima, governor of South Kivu, said that an Antonov-type Russian-made plane had landed weapons several times last week at the Kilembe airstrip, 70 kilometers south of Bukavu.

85. IRIN Update No. 1148 for the Great Lakes, April 3, 2001.
86. IRIN Update No. 1192 for the Great Lakes, June 4, 2001.
87. IRIN Update No. 1195 for the Great Lakes, June 7, 2001.
88. PANA, "Mayi-Mayi Attack Rebel Bastion in Eastern DR Congo," February 18, 2001.
89. IRIN Update No. 1112 for the Great Lakes, February 12, 2001.
90. HRW, "Congo: Massacres in Ugandan-Controlled Areas," January 22, 2001.
91. UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: Guinea, Uganda, Chechnya," January 23, 2001.
92. Amnesty International, "Uganda Must Act Now to Halt Further Slaughter in the DRC," January 24, 2001.
93. HRW, "Ugandan Occupation Worsens Congo's Problems," March 28, 2001.
94. European Union, "Declaration by the Presidency on Behalf of the EU on the Hema-Lendu Conflict in the Northeastern DRC," February 1, 2001.
95. IRIN Update No. 1102 for the Great Lakes, January 29, 2001.
96. IRIN Update No. 1111 for the Great Lakes, February 9, 2001.
97. AFP, "Rival Tribes in Northeast DR Congo Agree to Restore Peace," February 18, 2001. The tensions were also exacerbated by a dispute with Wamba's RCD, which controlled the area until the previous month. The squabbling had led to a power vacuum in Bunia, which had no real political administration since August of the previous year. On January 2001, Wamba's two deputies signed a merger pact with Bemba to create the FLC, which has since taken over the administration of the area.
98. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup No. 60, February 17–23, 2001.
99. IRIN Update No. 1120 for the Great Lakes, February 22, 2001.
100. IRIN Update No. 1123 for the Great Lakes, February 27, 2001.
101. IRIN Update No. 1124 for the Great Lakes, February 28, 2001.
102. IRIN Update No. 1130 for the Great Lakes, March 8, 2001.
103. Other sources had maintained that Masasu and some seven others were executed toward the end of November 2000 in Katanga, probably after a summary trial before the *Cour d'Ordre Militaire* (COM), the military court. Some top DRC officials appeared to have at the very least condoned and perhaps actively instigated some of the executions, apparently as a means of stamping out perceived opposition to their hold on power.
104. Since 1997, COM had attained a notoriety for dispensing summary justice with little regard for international fair trial standards. At least thirty-five people were known to have been executed during 2001, some within hours of their trial. None were given the opportunity to appeal their sentence.
105. Amnesty International, "DR Congo: Government Must End the Torture and Killing of Suspected Opponents," March 28, 2001.

- It was known that some of the detainees who “disappeared,” including Aimee Ntabarusha Mungu and her son David Mulume, were being held at Kinshasa’s main prison, but many remained unaccounted for.
106. The report adds that the children too had been among the victims of torture. In mid-November 2000, members of the security forces beat the two children and wife of Mangoni Siane, a security guard of the opposition leader Joseph Olenghankoy to force them to reveal his whereabouts.
 107. The government and other parties present at the Gaborone conference signed an agreement promising the liberation of all political prisoners.
 108. IRIN, “DRC: Rights Group Concerned over Disappearance, detentions,” May 11, 2001.
 109. IRIN Update No. 1198 for the Great Lakes, June 12, 2001.
 110. IRIN Update No. 1207 for the Great Lakes, June 25, 2001.
 111. IRIN Update No. 1128 for the Great Lakes, March 6, 2001.
 112. IRIN Update No. 1203 for the Great Lakes, June 19, 2001.
 113. IRIN Update No. 1143 for the Great Lakes, March 27, 2001.
 114. AFP, “DRC Rebels Rebuff Charges of Human Rights Abuses,” March 15, 2001.
 115. HRW, “Eastern Congo: Rebel Persecution of Rights Activists,” August 21, 2001.
 116. OCHA, “Women Facing War in Congo,” March 6, 2001.
 117. Amnesty International, “DRC: A Weapon of War against Unarmed Civilians,” June 26, 2001.
 118. AFP, “Mai-Mai Expected to Release Hostages Soon, Say DRC Rebels,” May 21, 2001.
 119. IRIN Update No. 1232 for the Great Lakes, July 30, 2001.
 120. Amnesty International, “Rwandese-Controlled Eastern DRC: Devastating Human Toll,” June 19, 2001.
 121. IRIN Update No. 1212 for the Great Lakes, July 22, 2001.
 122. IRIN Update No. 1212 for the Great Lakes, July 22, 2001.
 123. AFP, “Ugandan Army Deployed to End DRC Witchhunt in Which 800 Were Killed,” July 12, 2001.
 124. Reuters, “Officer Says Congo Witchhunt Kills Almost 400,” July 4, 2001.
 125. HRW, “DR Congo: Rwanda Responsible for Severe Abuses,” February 1, 2001.
 126. UN-DPI, “Annan: Instruments to Protect Civilians in Wartime Must Be Updated,” April 10, 2001.
 127. IRIN Update No. 1224 for the Great Lakes, July 18, 2001.
 128. IRIN-CEA, CAR-ROC: IRIN News Briefs, July 18, 2001.
 129. UNHCR, “Briefing Notes: FYR of Macedonia/Serbia, Ecuador/Colombia, Eritrea/Sudan, CAR/ Congo DRC,” July 20, 2001.
 130. In January 2001, local ROC authorities grew more fearful that some areas had been infiltrated by fighters from either side of

- the conflict. Between January 20 and 26, a ship carrying eighty Congolese attempting to make their way downstream to Brazzaville was stopped at both rebel and government checkpoints on the Ubangui River. The crew later told a UNHCR official in Likouala that the boat came under fire after leaving a rebel position 20 kilometers north of Impfondo. DRC soldiers then boarded the vessel and held it for three days, during which time the boat was looted and the passengers were robbed of all their possessions. The ship was eventually allowed to proceed, but soldiers forced the eighty civilians to remain behind in a village called Lindika.
131. UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: European Asylum, Guinea, Congolese Refugees, Pakistan, Assistant High Commissioner in Zambia," January 26, 2001.
 132. European Community Humanitarian office (ECHO), "Commission Approves Humanitarian Aid Worth \$5.5 million," January 29, 2001.
 133. CARITAS-France, "Congo: Support for 50,000 Refugees in Likouala Region," August 1, 2001.
 134. Reuters, "Worried Congolese Head to Zambia after Kabila's Death," January 19, 2001.
 135. AFP, "Two-Hundred DRC Refugees Flee to Zambia after Kabila's Assassination," February 1, 2001.
 136. Xinhua, "U.S. Donates \$200,000 to Congolese Refugees in Zambia," January 25, 2001.
 137. Xinhua, "U.S. Donates Money to Refugees in Zambia," July 19, 2001.
 138. PANA, "Germans Offer \$240,000 for Congolese Refugees," February 14, 2001.
 139. IRIN-SA, "Zambia: Refugees Face Severe Food Shortages," March 13, 2001.
 140. Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Dispatch No. 90, April 7, 2001.
 141. AFP, "Surrounded by Violence, DR Congo Refugees Seek Shelter in Angola," August 31, 2001.
 142. AFP, "Zimbabwe Detains Thirty Refugees from Africa's Great Lakes," February 1, 2001.
 143. PANA, "Fear after the Death of Kabila Creates an Influx of Refugees into Malawi," January 24, 2001.
 144. AFP, "DR Congo Refugees Spark Diplomatic Row in Malawi," April 17, 2001.
 145. UNHCR, "DR Congo: The Impact on Refugees," January 24, 2001.
 146. AFP, "2,600 Refugees from Burundi and DRC Flee to Tanzania," March 6, 2001.
 147. Xinhua, "UNHCR Calls for Prudence on Repatriation of Congolese Refugees in Tanzania," March 30, 2001.

148. Xinhua, "France to Donate Food for Refugees in Tanzania," April 11, 2001.
149. U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Contributing Additional \$26 Million in FY 2001 to UNHCR," April 11, 2001.
150. Reuters International, "Children's Book Project: Life in Nyaragusu Refugee Camp," August 14, 2001.
151. Xinhua, "Tanzania Plagued by Roaming Refugees," January 29, 2001.
152. Xinhua, "Tanzania Order Refugees to Go Back to Camps," May 21, 2001.
153. Xinhua, "UNHCR Supports Repatriation of Refugees in Tanzania," June 28, 2001.
154. JRS Dispatch No. 96, July 11, 2001. Bilateral meetings between the Tanzanian and Burundian governments were dogged by Burundi's claims that Tanzania allowed the camp to be used as a recruitment base for the FDD.
155. AFP, "DR Congo Ethnic Fighting Sends 6,000 Fleeing to Uganda," January 19, 2001.
156. UNHCR, "Briefing Notes: Guinea, Uganda, Chechnya," January 23, 2001. Before their transfer to the transit center, some refugees were sleeping in the open.
157. U.S. Committee for Refugees, "USCR Country Report on Uganda: Statistics on Refugees and Other Uprooted People," June 2001.
158. UNHCR, "Refugees Flee DRC for Uganda: 'All My People Are Gone,'" March 8, 2001.
159. WFP, "Appeals for More Aid to Continue Feeding Nearly 700,000 Refugees and Displaced Persons in Uganda," March 12, 2001.
160. Reuters, "Refugee Report Rapes Fuel AIDS in Africa's War Zones," June 20, 2001.
161. Oxfam, "One Man Is Dead but Thousands of Others Are Dying," January 19, 2001.
162. For 2001, the UNHCR, which operates on donated funds rather than from an allocation from the UN, planned a budget of \$955 million but foresaw contributions of only \$810 million. In response, the agency prepared to make staff cuts of 15 percent. Since about 80 percent of the agency's staff of 5,100 worked directly with displaced people, a reduction in staff and programs would mean a direct impact on refugees: fewer medical, nutritional, and educational programs; and less investment in water projects, schools, and other infrastructure. See Refugee International, "Europe Is Turning Its Back on the World's Refugees," *International Herald Tribune*, June 20, 2001.
163. WFP, "Increasing Food Assistance on the Frontline in the Northern DRC," June 8, 2001.
164. WFP, "Barge Carries Food to Tens of Thousands on DRC Frontlines," July 31, 2001.

165. OCHA, Flash OCHA-DRC English Summary, February 28–March 7, 2001.
166. Norwegian Refugee Council, Internal Displacement in DR Congo: New Profile Summary, April 9, 2001.
167. AFP, “WFP Begins Massive Airlift into Ravaged Southeastern DR Congo,” January 19, 2001.
168. World Vision, “World Vision Launches New Response to IDPs in Government-Held DRC,” July 30, 2001.
169. “East Congo’s Refugee Highway,” *Christian Science Monitor*, February 16, 2001.
170. IRIN Update No. 1108 for the Great Lakes, February 6, 2001.
171. AFP, “DR Congo’s Volatile Ituri Province,” April 27, 2001.
172. Action against Hunger, “AAH Assists Refugees Fleeing from Ethnic Clashes in the DRC,” February 5, 2001.
173. IRIN Update No. 1146 for the Great Lakes, March 30, 2001.
174. The London-based pressure group Global Witness (GW) issued a report on January 23, 2001 that the renewed instability in the DRC could strengthen illegal diamond trading networks. The GW analyst Alex Yearsley wrote that UNITA gems mined in neighboring Angola were being traded in the DRC, and the current instability could allow UNITA a better foothold. Despite international sanctions, UNITA members were still able to traffic diamond in Kinshasa. An informal network was operating there with links to major South African dealers. Yearsley said there was evidence that UNITA stones were also being trafficked through Zambia, where they were being labeled as Zambian gems.
175. IRIN-SA: IRIN News Briefs, February 22, 2001.
176. Panel members stated that mines and other resources were heavily guarded and often located in insecure areas. These sites were “cloaked by an atmosphere of lawlessness, violence, and fear.” The complexity of the situation in the vast territory, the difficulty of travel and communications, and the insecurity all posed “formidable problems” for the investigation. The formal nature of the institutionalized military commerce on the allied side was helped not only by the skeletal state structure in the DRC but also by the fact that the allies were assisting a recognized government. This contrasted with the situations in regard to Uganda and Rwanda, which were both supporting rebel movements and, therefore, had no legitimate claims to DRC resources.
177. AFP, “Uganda Begins Probe on DR Congo Looting Allegations,” July 19, 2001.
178. IRIN-CEA Update No. 1158 for the Great Lakes, April 17, 2001.
179. “The Plundering of Congo: Without Precedent,” *Christian Science Monitor*, May 16, 2001.
180. Reuters, “Uganda and Rwanda Deny Plundering Congo,” April 17, 2001.

181. IRIN Update No. 1163 for the Great Lakes, April 24, 2001.
182. AFP, "Uganda to Send Officials to Defend Its Case at UN Security Council," April 20, 2001.
183. IRIN Update No. 1159 for the Great Lakes, April 18, 2001.
184. AFP, "Rwanda Asks UN to Reject Report on Mineral Looting in DR Congo," April 26, 2001.
185. AFP, "DRC Rebels Head to UN Security Council to Rebuff Looting Charges," May 2, 2001.
186. HRW, "Congo: Resource Exploitation Exacerbates Civilian Suffering," April 20, 2001. The UN panel charged Rwanda with using prisoners from its jails to mine resources in the eastern DRC.
187. IRIN Update No. 1171 for the Great Lakes, May 4, 2001.
188. Mahmond Kassem's career included positions such as Egypt's under secretary for foreign affairs and Egypt's permanent representative to the UN.
189. IRIN Update No. 1211 for the Great Lakes, June 29, 2001.

10 THE INTER-CONGOLESE DIALOGUE

1. IRIN-SA, "DRC & Botswana: Peace Facilitator Optimistic," January 19, 2001.
2. Okitundu acknowledged, "This would require the agreement of all parties." He also said that many things were "freeing up now" in the DRC, and that the country's diplomatic channels were being "reinvigorated and opening up to the world" and that the government was now looking for "a peaceful solution to the war."
3. IRIN Update No. 1111 for the Great Lakes, February 9, 2001.
4. IRIN Update No. 1105 for the Great Lakes, February 1, 2001. Patasse also set out a peace plan comprised of "the creation of a corridor by foreign forces in the DRC to allow the deployment of a UN buffer force, recognition of the designated facilitator, setting up a council of African Presidents to pursue negotiations, and the withdrawal of occupation forces from the country."
5. IRIN Update No. 1101 for the Great Lakes, January 26, 2001.
6. UN-DPI, Press Conference by the president of the DRC, February 2, 2001.
7. IRIN Update No. 1104 for the Great Lakes, January 31, 2001.
8. IRIN Update No. 1122 for the Great Lakes, February 26, 2001.
9. IRIN Update No. 1116 for the Great Lakes, February 16, 2001.
10. IRIN-SA, "Southern Africa: IRIN News Briefs," March 15, 2001.
11. IRIN Update No. 1137 for the Great Lakes, March 19, 2001. The leader of the political party Innovative Forces for Union and Solidarity (known as FONUS), Joseph Olenghankoy, harshly criticized Joseph Kabila for his numerous absences from the country during first sixty-eight days in office. Kabila had traveled five times abroad and to fifteen different countries and met with seventeen

- heads of state and Western dignitaries. Olenghankoy pointed out that Kabila had not once set foot in a DRC province and added, “The way the president surrenders himself to western countries is dangerous to us.” On April 6, Masire announced that he was going to Kinshasa to participate in the latest round of pre-dialogue talks in Gaborone. See IRIN Update No. 1151 for the Great Lakes, April 6, 2001.
12. IRIN Update No. 1152 for the Great Lakes Region, April 9, 2001.
 13. AFP, “DR Congo Combatants Agree on Principles for Internal Talks,” May 4, 2001.
 14. IRIN Update No. 1172 for the Great Lakes, May 7, 2001.
 15. AFP, “Date for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue Set for July,” May 11, 2001.
 16. UN secretary general, “The Secretary-General Highlights Remaining Challenges in the DRC Peace Process,” May 20, 2001.
 17. AFP, “Masire in Eastern DRC for Talks with Rebels,” March 30, 2001.
 18. IRIN Update No. 1298 for the Great Lakes, June 26, 2001.
 19. AFP, “Rebels in DRC Held Talks before Dialogue with Government,” July 2, 2001. On May 29, 2001, the DRC government denounced a statement from a group calling itself the Council of Churches on the DRC, which is in charge of coordinating the “pre-dialogue” talks amongst the Congolese. The group claimed it represented all political parties and civil society organizations. At the weekend, the group appointed Pastor Jean-Paul Moka as the “local mediator” for the pre-dialogue talks. “The greater majority of Congolese would like our own people to regain control over this process and for Masire to resume his true role—that of facilitator—by letting the Congolese to decide the future of their country among themselves.” See IRIN Update No. 1188 for the Great Lakes, May 29, 2001.
 20. IRIN Update No. 73 for the Great Lakes, May 25, 2001.
 21. IRIN Update No. 1210 for the Great Lakes, June 28, 2001.
 22. IRIN Update No. 1215 for the Great Lakes, July 5, 2001.
 23. IRIN Update No. 1218 for the Great Lakes, July 10, 2001.
 24. IRIN-CEA Weekly Roundup No. 80, July 7–13, 2001. Despite this setback, on July 20, civil society representatives from around the DRC met in Kinshasa to begin preparations for the dialogue. According to television reports, the first stage of preparation, collecting information and identifying resources and people, was completed. The second stage, which involved drafting a document on the various issues to be discussed, was to take place in early August. Issues to be discussed included institutional reforms, the electoral process, peace and reconciliation, the management of the transition, humanitarian emergencies, as well as the reform of the army, police, and the civil protection department. The draft was to be sent to the provincial governments so that amendments could be made before

- adoption. See IRIN Update No. 1227 for the Great Lakes, July 23, 2001.
25. IRIN Update No. 1231 for the Great Lakes, July 27, 2001.
 26. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup No. 83, July 28–August 3, 2001. Following six days of negotiations led by François Lumumba, the LNR Mayi-Mayi released on July 16 one Kenyan and sixteen Thai hostages, whom they had held captive for more than two months.
 27. IRIN Update No. 1243 for the Great Lakes, August 14, 2001.
 28. IRIN Update No. 1244 for the Great Lakes, August 15, 2001.
 29. IRIN Update No. 1247 for the Great Lakes, August 20, 2001.
 30. IRIN Update No. 1235 for the Great Lakes, August 2, 2001.
 31. AFP, “DRC Government Sets Up Committee to Plan National Dialogue,” August 9, 2001.
 32. IRIN Update No. 1229 for the Great Lakes, July 25, 2001.
 33. UN secretary general, “Secretary-General Hopes August 20 Meeting in Botswana Will Pave Way for Inter-Congolese Dialogue,” August 17, 2001.
 34. European Union, “Declaration by the Presidency on Behalf of the European Union on the Inter-Congolese Dialogue,” August 17, 2001.
 35. AFP, “DRC Congo’s Kabila Goes to Gaborone for Landmark Talks on Dialogue,” August 20, 2001.
 36. IRIN Update No. 1248 for the Great Lakes, August 21, 2001.
 37. AFP, “Talks about DRC Political Future Open in Botswana,” August 20, 2001.
 38. UN-DPI, “Security Council Members Welcome Meeting on Inter-Congolese Dialogue,” August 20, 2001.
 39. AFP, “DRC Reconciliation Talks Move in ‘Right Direction,’ Says UN,” August 22, 2001.
 40. IRIN Update No. 1249 for the Great Lakes, August 22, 2001.
 41. IRIN Weekly No. 86 for the Great Lakes, August 24, 2001. The RCD-Goma announced, “We want all the destructive forces be identified, disarmed, and repatriated at simultaneously.”
 42. “Vital Breakthrough for Congo,” *Mail & Guardian*, August 24, 2001. Okitundu noted that the dialogue process had received good financial support, although not enough for the whole budget. “I think that one of the things that made those who contributed stall was that the process itself stalled. Originally we were working to fund work for ten months, and we’ve been at it now for eighteen months. We have managed to plod along, but only because the dialogue process has not taken place. We hope that when we get into full swing as we are now, the monies will be forthcoming.”
 43. UN-DPI, “DRC: Parties Agree on Start of Inter-Congolese Dialogue,” August 24, 2001.
 44. AFP, “DRC Peace Dialogue to Start on October 15, Probably in South Africa,” August 24, 2001.

45. IRIN Update No. 1254 for the Great Lakes, August 29, 2001.
46. IRIN-CEA, Weekly Roundup No. 87, August 25–31, 2001.
47. IRIN Update No. 1256 for the Great Lakes, August 31, 2001.
48. UN secretary general, “Secretary-General Welcomes to Start Inter-Congolese Dialogue,” August 27, 2001. It was largely at the insistence of the DRC-Goma that a deadline, which the Lusaka accord had set for early 2000, was omitted. The RCD-Goma had argued that to impose one would risk blocking the dialogue. See AFP, “DRC Rivals Recommit to Two-Years-Old Peace Accord,” August 25, 2001. Government of Japan, “Statement by the Press Secretary/Director-General for the Press and Public Relations, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the Preparatory Meeting to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in DRC,” August 28, 2001.
49. European Union, “Declaration by the Presidency on Behalf of the EU on the Meeting in Gaborone Concerning the Inter-Congolese Dialogue,” August 20, 2001.

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