
Strengthening democratic institutions and Governance reforms in the DRC. A prospective analysis sketch for the crisis in the DRC.



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2015-2016
elections, will they
be as chaotic as in
2011?

Prelude:

Decades of war in the Region. Yes. It's said that Governments in the region sponsored armed groups to extract or control natural resources such as land, minerals, and smuggling routes. It's recommended that Land conflicts must be resolved as part of the national democratic reform process; —Armed groups are taking over large tracts of land in eastern Congo, displacing more than 2 million people. Congolese military commanders and militia leaders have set up cattle ranches and other businesses on these properties. Some of them occupy the land as squatters, and others obtained titles to land from successive national governments. A land commission should be set up, investigations should be conducted on land titling, the national land law should be reviewed, and land-reform proposals should be discussed in a national dialogue."

Since 1996, Over 8 million people dead. Over 2.5 million displaced and Congolese refugees scattered across Africa. Let's note that DR. Congo is home to the deadliest conflict since World War II.

Introduction:

Crisis in Eastern DR Congo began in the early 1990s and continues to day. It has encompassed two international wars—from 1996 to 1997 and 1998 to 2003—and multiple invasions from neighboring countries, with combatants from many armed groups, both foreign and domestic. While Congo has abundant natural resources, it is also the world's poorest

country per capita, according to the United Nations. Congo is also home to the largest and most expensive U.N. peacekeeping mission in the world, MONUSCO, which has more than 20,000 personnel and an annual budget of \$1.4 billion. The eastern part of the country is plagued by instability, as armed groups and militias continue to wreak havoc on the population. Meanwhile, the conflict gets very little coverage by the international media.

During the Congo wars from 1996 to 1997 and 1998 to 2003, the conflict involved nine countries and more than 40 rebel groups. Today three main categories of armed groups operate in eastern Congo: the Rwandan Hutu FDLR; the Rwanda and Uganda-backed M23; and various local armed groups. But how are they resourced and funded, how have they come to day, with whom they work, how do they survive in an environment of distrust despite the terror and desolation they sow? All of these groups have attempted to seize control of natural resources in order to continue fighting.

The conflict in Congo is notorious for serious violations of human rights, including violence against women and the use of child soldiers.

How to present the fatal moment approaching: time to be frank and moment of truth for all. Repentance? Perhaps.

Violence is in the process of earning the country at an indescribable pace, and a poisonous atmosphere is felt at the gradual approach of parliamentary and

presidential elections in 2016. I wish that the local, urban, municipal elections be postponed at certain dates, later.

The Framework Agreement of Addis Ababa has the lead in the wing, it is said and repeated, is no longer a mystery to anyone. The peace process in the DRC is down: this is the unfortunate conclusion which just led the working group of ten platforms and organizations of Congolese society. On the ground, even if it meant less noise of boots and guns in the east of the DRC, but not in Beni, there are dead who are registered every day, stretching, and macabre accounting. The local population, traumatized by the killings attributed to invisible commandos involving foreign rebels, opted for exile or in other provinces or in neighboring countries, to live this ordeal stoically.

More worrying is the fact that when members of local armed groups defecting and go to MONUSCO, local and national authorities, the DDR program is running at low speed, to the point that they are almost abandoned to their fate in the cantonment centers or transit, these rebels returning on tiptoe their fiefs to revive their former activities. Which demotivates their fellow candidates for voluntary disarmament still entrenched in the various maquis.

This means that the peace process in the DRC has failed. This allows me to say that the main causes of failure of the peace process are real, it is time to challenge all signatories to the Framework Agreement

of Addis Ababa who are said to have the solution in their hands

People tend to a slowdown in the implementation of this Framework Agreement in Addis Ababa as it is true that there is much to do, so that is more than 8 years after the signing in Nairobi December 5, 2006 of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes region by the 11 member states of the ICGLR. Two years later, it was the signing of the Framework Agreement in Addis Ababa by the same Member States, which has raised hopes at the Congolese population.

I remain convinced that despite some progress, substantial efforts are still needed.

If we are not careful, the Framework Agreement of Addis Ababa on 24 February 2013, yet necessary, could extend uselessly the list of the peace agreements in the DRC that failed one after the other. This is the reason why, after more than two years of implementation, stakeholders and partners are struggling to overcome the "word of the liturgy."

And while the government strives to uphold stability and security in almost all the national territory, populations of most eastern part of the DRC, experiencing indescribable insecurity consecutive persistence of armed groups' activism and to a new form of violence of extreme cruelty reflecting the fragility of the Congolese security forces and the limits of the use of force as the only approach to be implemented to neutralize armed groups.

Here's the truth:

As the possibility of a third term of Joseph Kabila is spirited away to the presidential majority, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) plunged into a deep political crisis. Tensions exacerbated by the approach of a responsible election cycle (7 elections in less than 2 years) and uncertain as to the funding of elections and reliability of the electoral register. Since January 2015, political violence has escalated, with deadly protests against the proposed amendment of the electoral law and mass arrests of democracy activists in Kinshasa and Goma. Events that give a foretaste of what could happen if the elections were to "slip" in Congo.

There is a brief open window for peace to take root in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The DRC conflict, which has lasted for over two decades, has left more than 6 million people dead, displaced countless others within DRC and throughout the region, and has led to trans-boundary regional conflict. The report recommends that the keys to forming a credible peace process include: 1) incentives for DRC and its neighbors to cooperate on economic, security, and refugee issues; 2) institutional reforms that allow for democratic transformation; and 3) repercussions for those who have committed mass atrocities.

1. What solution to the crisis?

The presidential and legislative elections in 2016 will be decisive for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): they could be the first elections without the participation of the current president. This perspective puts all players in the Congolese political

scene on and has already caused fatal violence. President Joseph Kabila must respect the two-term limit imposed by the Constitution and prepare to leave power. A consensus on key electoral issues, in particular the adoption of the calendar and the electoral list and a high-level commitment of international donors and partners are needed. In the absence of agreement and lack of clarity on the electoral process, and if it lags significantly behind the international partners should review their support for the government.

For a successful alternation, the number one imperative is of course to respect the Congolese Constitution and the two non-renewable terms of the current DRC's president. "The president must be prepared to leave power." But the way to achieve it is deceitful. The initial scenario of the presidential majority was to renew President Kabila and therefore to amend the Constitution. But the warnings of the international community can significantly cool the bad tendencies in the DRC. The draft amendment to the electoral law, which is expected to link the elections to the population census and thus drag the electoral calendar has faced a wave of unprecedented protests in Kinshasa and the East DRC. Again, the power back. "The moment of truth approaches." The ruling majority is now fragmented and short of options for alleviating the 2016 deadline.

2. A very sluggish and unprepared decentralization

In this context, another pitfall is precipitated by the Congolese government:

the decentralization legislation and the passage of 11-26 provinces. A reform that lack of resources and is not properly prepared. The power seeks to complete in six months what has not been done in nine years. Accelerate decentralization, when lack of institutional reforms takes place. Local tensions are perceptible and may cause security troubles during elections next year and increase instability.

Given the technical shortcomings and the absence of consensus on the electoral list, local and provincial elections scheduled for 2015 could undermine the credibility of the national elections in 2016. In addition to an electoral timetable too ambitious and too costly, the government decentralization that precipitates a lack of resources and is not properly prepared, particularly as regards the division of the eleven current 26 provinces as stipulated in the 2006 Constitution.

It seems that save time capitalizing on potential "delays" is for the government the main objective on which it can agree.

The moment of truth approach to the process of democratization launched a decade ago. Excessive hopes engendered by the 2006 elections, the first and so far the only relatively free since independence, have not materialized. Nevertheless, at this stage delay the presidential and legislative elections in 2016 would amount to an unconstitutional extension of the scheme. The violence that took place in January in Kinshasa have clearly demonstrated the desire for change of the Congolese population. If the electoral process can take place freely, international actors, with

a large United Nations mission in place, risk supporting a regime even less legitimate than it is now.

All efforts must focus on creating the conditions for the holding of credible elections in 2016. To this end, the Congolese political actors and the CENI should review the electoral calendar and postpone the local elections until the process decentralization is completed. The provincial elections should be organized to coincide or be combined with the national elections. A serious strategy of prevention and conflict resolution should be implemented, especially at local level. Successful elections do not mean democracy and good governance: the transformation of the political system is far from being achieved and requires a change in governance.

3. Ways out/recommendations:

To break the deadlock, I think it is possible to prioritize the polls, elections.

- The election calendar should be reviewed and local elections should be postponed until the decentralization process is completed.
- 4. Provincial elections (expensive and difficult to organize) shall be associated with national elections" in November 2016.
- 5. The government must then make available to the Election Commission (CENI) "the necessary financial resources, in a transparent manner." For the think

tank, the next open dialogue and political space.

6. The CENI must work seamlessly with the opposition, electoral experts, civil society and government on the establishment of legitimate and complete electoral lists. An innovative measure concerns precisely the political opposition, sometimes "fragmented".
7. For the opposition and the G7 it is better to set up a cross-party structure to improve coordination on electoral issues.

Let's note that successful elections do not mean democracy and good governance: the transformation of the political system is far from being achieved and requires a change in governance practices in DRC
