

Despite national elections and another pact on security and development, signed in 2006, the war in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo never really ended and has caused more human suffering and massive human rights violations in 2012/2013. Some 770.000 people were forced to flee their homes due to new fights in the Kivus between January and September 2012. An additional 60.000 civilians have searched for protection in neighbouring Rwanda and Uganda. In total some 1.7 million citizens still are displaced internally and 500.000 people are living as refugees in neighbouring countries. The DRC will miss all of its Millennium Development Goals due to insecurity, the illegal exploitation of resources by armed militias and the mass exodus of the civilian population. Due to the fighting and the on-going misery in eastern DRC the national income per capita is less than 50 cents per day and the country is now in last place in the annual UNDP development rankings.

Insecurity and massive human rights violations tremendously have increased since the revolt of the militia M 23. Leading personalities of this rebel movement have been involved in massacres in the last years: Colonel Innocent Zimurinda has commandeered the 2008 Kiwandja massacre of 67 civilians and the 2009 Shalio massacre of 139 civilians. Colonel Innocent Kania has been linked to massive human rights violations in Ituri and Orientale provinces in 2004. Colonel Sultani Makenga has been involved in the Kiwandja massacre and Colonel Baudouin Ngaruye has been accused of participating in the Shalio massacre as a FARDC commander. Former M 23-commander Bosco Ntaganda was responsible for horrific abuses and has been searched by the International Criminal Court (ICC) by arrest warrants since 2006. His surrender and transfer to the ICC in March 2013 marks a major victory against impunity in DRC.

The M 23 committed massive human rights violations after entering the town of Goma in November 2012. Deliberate attacks on civilians and threats against critical citizens have created an atmosphere of terror around the town. They even shot dead a 4 year old girl when she asked where the militia people were taking her father. Attacks of IDP camps by M 23 fighters resulted in numerous rapes and the looting of many houses. Numerous abductions by rebel fighter have created an atmosphere of fear among the civilian population. Despite claims of the M 23 leadership that the movement fighters were disciplined and some arrests of militia people, most human rights violations were not brought to trial and impunity persisted.

Massive human rights violations also were committed by the regular army (FARDC) and other rebel movements. After the occupation of Goma the FARDC have retreated their forces to the town of Minova and they became responsible for widespread looting, robberies, extortions and raping in the city. More than 80 rapes by regular soldiers have been registered in Minova and around this city at the end of November 2012. Many houses were looted by soldiers and sometimes women even were gang raped in front of their families. As the FARDC focussed on defeating M 23, other militias became more active in North and South Kivu and committed massive human rights violations against the civilian population. Hundreds of civilians were killed in Masisi, Kalehe and Walikale during fighting between FARDC and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). Dozens of civilians died due to abuses by Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in northern Congo. Abuses by the regular army or by armed rebel movements included forced recruitment of children, rape, large-scale looting and destruction of property, summary executions and unlawful killings.

The lack of political will of the Congolese government to protect its own people undermines all attempts to implement democratic reforms and to ensure the respect of human rights. Displacement, recruitment of child soldiers, gender based violence and the illegal mining effectively may be stopped only by a credible security sector reform in DRC. Unfortunately

until today the Congolese government has no commitment to reform the security sector. Therefore the situation of the civilian population did not improve since the formal end of the war and despite massive international development assistance of more than \$14 billion the situation of the civilian population still is disastrous.

Human rights violations have been committed against political opponents during the campaigns for presidential and legislative elections in November 2011. More than 50 supporters of opposition parties have been killed by security forces in the Kinshasa area. Many opponents were held and abused in illegal detention centres. Up to 150 corpses of killed supporters of the opposition parties were found in Congo River.

Society for Threatened Peoples is deeply concerned about deliberate attempts by the government and all conflict parties to intimidate and censor journalists and to violate press freedom. In December 2012 TV stations in Goma have been closed down by M 23 rebels. In North Kivu under control of M 23, media were subject of threats, occupation of their offices, abduction of their personnel, censorship and control of their editorial policies. At least three journalists in M 23 controlled areas in North Kivu have fled into hiding in August/September 2012 after receiving threats from leading commanders of the rebel movement. But Congolese state officials are by no means more respectful regarding press freedom. Radio France International (RFI) and the UN-sponsored Radio Okapi have been jammed for four days in December 2012 for so called "administrative" non-compliance. The TV journalists Guy Ngiaba and Dadou Etiom have been detained for nine days in the city of Bandundu in December 2012 for criticising the provincial assembly president. The TV journalist Pierre Sosthene Kambidi has been held for 106 days in detention in autumn 2012 for his contacts with an opposition party. The radio journalist Guylain Chandjaro has been murdered by unknown perpetrators in Bunia in May 2013. After publicly criticising a Chinese-run hospital in Kinshasa Joachim Diana Gikupa, the editor of the private daily "La Colombe", has been condemned to six months in prison by a court in Kinshasa in December 2012. Another newspaper, the private daily "Le Journal", has been indefinitely suspended by the Communications Ministry in June 2012 for "inciting racism and tribalism". The journal had accused Congolese of Rwandan ancestry of secretly supporting rebel movements in eastern DRC.

The rights of indigenous forest peoples in DRC still are ignored and violated. The rainforests in DRC cover an area of 500.000 square kilometres. Most of these forests are the traditional land of indigenous peoples. The loss of their ancestral lands has a devastating effect on the indigenous social system and livelihood. Most families are forced to abandon their traditional way of live by loggers, rebel movements, administrations or by the guards of national parks which have been established on their ancestral land without any credible consultation of the indigenous population. Many Pygmy groups have been forced out of the forests to settle down in IDP camps. Due to widespread racism many indigenous even in the IDP camps are facing discrimination and the denial of basic services. Indigenous children are denied equal access to education due to a lack of schools in their villages. The illiteracy rate is close to 100 %. Indigenous girls who have to travel long distances to attend school often are victims of sexual harassment by teachers and the majority ethnic group of Bantus. Most of the indigenous settlements are lacking clean water and access to health services. Discrimination, racism and widespread prejudices have caused massive human rights violations and have contributed to a status of indigenous Congolese as second class citizens. Human rights violations by rebel movements are widespread. In May 2013, thirteen indigenous women have been burnt to death by Mai-Mai fighters in Lwelakalunga in the province of Katanga. The absence of a specific national law for indigenous peoples and the lack of legal recognition are underlining

that indigenous issues still are not a priority for the Congolese government. Unfortunately numerous development programmes in DRC do not take into account of the specific problems faced by indigenous peoples.