Issue Paper

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
THE AUGUST 1998 REBELLION AND AFFECTED GROUPS
December 1998

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Table of Contents

MAP: THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
GLOSSARY

1. INTRODUCTION

2. BACKGROUND

3. CIVIL WAR
   3.1 Origins of the Conflict
   3.2 Opposing Forces
      3.2.1 Pro-Kabila Forces
      3.2.2 Rebel Forces
   3.3 Role of Mobutu-era Civil and Military Officials in the Current Conflict

4. FOREIGN INTERVENTIONS
   4.1 Pro-Kabila Interventions
4.2 Pro-rebel Interventions

5. IMPACT OF THE CONFLICT ON VARIOUS GROUPS

5.1 Ethnic Groups

5.1.1 Tutsis

5.1.2 People from Katanga

5.2 Journalists

5.3 Political Opposition

5.4 Human Rights Activists

5.5 Other Groups

5.5.1 Children

5.5.2 Family Members and Close Collaborators with Rebel or Government Leaders

6. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

NOTES ON SELECTED SOURCES

REFERENCES

MAP: THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

See original.


GLOSSARY

AFDL
Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaïre (Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaïre)

ASADHO
African Human Rights Association (Association africaine de défense des droits de l'homme)

ANR
National Intelligence Agency (Agence nationale de renseignements)

CADDHOM
Action Collective for the Development of Human Rights in Congo-Kinshasa (Collectif d'actions pour le développement des droits de l'homme au Congo-Kinshasa)

DRC
Democratic Republic of Congo (République démocratique du Congo—RDC)

FAC
Congolese Armed Forces (Forces armées congolaises)

FAR
Rwandan Armed Forces (Forces armées rwandaises)

FAZ
Zairian Armed Forces (Forces armées zaïroises)
OAU
Organization of African Unity
PDSC
Christian Social Democratic Party (Parti démocrate social chrétien)
RCD
Congolese Coalition for Democracy (Rassemblement congoïlas pour la démocratie)
SADC
South African Defence Community
RTNC
Congolese National Radio and Television (Radio Télévision Nationale Congolaise)
UDPS
Union for Democracy and Social Progress (Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social)
UNESCO
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VSV
Voice of the Voiceless for the Defence of Human Rights (Voix des sans voix pour la défense des droits de l'homme)

Note:
English translations of the names of ZairianDRC organizations are provided above for the reader's convenience. The English names are not official since English has no official status in the Democratic Republic of Congo and did not have official status in Zaire.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is a follow-up to the Issue Paper Democratic Republic of Congo: Situation of Selected Groups, [1] published by the Research Directorate of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) in April 1998. It reviews the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) starting with the events of 2 August 1998, when the country [translation] "was once again plunged into war" (Le nouvel Afrique-Asie Sept. 1998a, 6; Libération 7 Aug. 1998, 2; Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 2; AFP 31 Aug. 1998). It attempts to clarify the reasons for the conflict, identifies the national and regional players involved, and describes the situation of members of political opposition groups, ethnic groups and human rights groups, as well as of journalists. Finally, it takes a look at the future considerations for this country located in the troubled African Great Lakes region.

Note
This paper is available on the REFQUEST database, in the Regional Documentation Centres and on the IRB's Internet Website at <http://www.irb.gc.ca>.

2. BACKGROUND

Kabila, who was the spokesman for the AFDL, proclaimed himself president of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the new name given to Zaire (ibid.). The August 1997 Research Directorate paper ZaireDemocratic Republic of Congo: Chronology of Events January-July 1997 provides a detailed account of the various stages of the rebellion and the circumstances that brought the AFDL to power in Kinshasa. After coming to power, the AFDL banned all other political parties from engaging in any activities and became the only political organization able to function freely (Country Reports 1997 1998, 67-68; La Voix du CDH 27 Aug. 1998, 6). Paradoxically, President Kabila promised at the same time to hold free elections in 1999 (Country Reports 1997 1998, 67-68). The Issue Paper Democratic Republic of Congo: Situation of Selected Groups (see Section 1 above) gives a concise overview of the Kabila regime's record in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms from the time it took power until April 1998.

3. CIVIL WAR

3.1. Origins of the Conflict


A week later, on 2 August 1998, the Banyamulenge launched a rebellion against the Kabila regime in two towns simultaneously — Goma (North Kivu) and Bukavu (South Kivu) (Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 2; AFP 31 Aug. 1998; Libération 4 Aug. 1998, 6). At the same time, Banyamulenge soldiers in Kinshasa were fighting other Congolese soldiers who had remained loyal to President Kabila (Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 2; AFP 31 Aug. 1998; Libération 4 Aug. 1998, 6). Some observers consider that the conflict was triggered by President Kabila's decision to expel the Rwandan soldiers (Jeune Afrique 11-17 Aug. 1998, 12-13; Le nouvel Afrique-Asie Sept. 1998a, 7; Christian Science Monitor 13 Oct. 1998).

At first, the Kabila government blamed the insurrection on "armed elements claiming to be unhappy with the departure of the Rwandan soldiers" (Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 2) and on "collaborators [who had] taken up arms in order to disturb the peace" (AFP 31 Aug. 1998, Le nouvel Afrique-Asie Sept. 1998b, 12). However, two days after the start of the insurrection, President Kabila accused Rwanda and Uganda of "instigating the troubles [in his country] and taking part in them" (Le Monde 7 Aug. 1998, 4; ibid. 11 Aug. 1998, 3; AFP 31 Aug. 1998; New African Oct. 1998a, 12). (See Section 4.2 for Rwanda's and Uganda's official reactions to this accusation.) President Kabila even threatened to "export the war to Rwanda" if the "aggressors" did not leave the DRC (Le Monde 7 Aug. 1998, 4; Reuters 24 Sept. 1998). Both Rwanda and Uganda had provided military assistance to Kabila in his offensive against the Mobutu regime in October 1996 (Nyankanzi 1998, 76; AP 13 Oct. 1998).

To justify their armed insurrection, the Congolese rebels accused President Kabila of nepotism, despotism, corruption and bad government, and claimed that he had stirred up hatred among the country's various ethnic groups (Le Monde 5 Aug. 1998, 4; AP 27 Sept. 1998; Africa Confidential 28 Aug. 1998, 4-6). In a radio broadcast in Goma on 3 August 1998, the commander of the 10th battalion of the FAC rejected President Kabila's authority and called for his departure (Le Monde 5 Aug. 1998; Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 2). The 10th and 12th battalions had been present in Goma and
Bukavu respectively at the start of the rebellion and had thrown their support behind the rebels (*Jeune Afrique* 1-7 Sept. 1998, 16).

Etienne Tshisekedi wa Mulumba, leader of the democratic opposition forces and president of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social—UDPS), in a 4 September 1998 [translation] "Memorandum of the Democratic Opposition Forces of the DRC" addressed to the UN Secretary General, maintained that the causes of the civil war that had broken out on 2 August 1998 were essentially internal ones such as [translation] "the absence of democracy and the rule of law, violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, chaotic and non-transparent management of the state's affairs, corruption, nepotism, the notorious incompetency of the country's leading officials, etc." (Congonline 28 Sept. 1998).

After less than three months of fighting, this new Congolese rebellion had taken root in the Katanga, Maniema and Eastern provinces, in addition to North and South Kivu regions (*Jeune Afrique* 22-28 Sept. 1998b, 11; AFP 15 Oct. 1998; Reuters 16 Oct. 1998).

### 3.2. Opposing Forces

#### 3.2.1. Pro-Kabila Forces

According to official figures, there were 140,000 men in the Congolese Armed Forces before the start of the rebellion (*Le Soir* 28 Aug. 1998; Reuters 16 Oct. 1998; *Info-CongoKinshasa* 31 Aug. 1998, 2). However, it is not clear how many of these are still loyal to Kabila, since at least two battalions (the 10th and the 12th) have thrown their support behind the rebels (*Jeune Afrique* 1-7 Sept. 1998, 16; see also *Le Monde* 5 Aug. 1998; *Info-CongoKinshasa* 31 Aug. 1998, 2). Kabila has also announced the creation of an armed self-defence militia made up of some 25,000 youths (*Info-CongoKinshasa* 30 Sept. 1998, 1; Reuters 16 Sept. 1998). A number of former Mobutu-regime generals also offered Kabila their services soon after the start of hostilities (*Jeune Afrique Économie* 14 Sept.-4 Oct. 1998, 22; Reuters 15 Sept. 1998).


In a 25 September 1998 press release, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) stated that it was particularly disturbed by reports that [translation] "a significant number" of Rwandan asylum seekers were leaving the refugee camps in various Central African
countries and rejoining the war in the DRC (UNHCR 25 Sept. 1998; United Nations OCHA IRIN-CEA 11 Nov. 1998; AFP 26 Sept. 1998). The newspaper Libération estimated that 2,000 refugees were recruited by Kabila in the camps located to the north of Brazzaville (30 Sept. 1998).

3.2.2. Rebel Forces

The Forces of Liberty (Forces de la liberté), the armed branch of the Congolese rebellion (AFP 15 Oct. 1998), are primarily made up of Banyamulenge and disaffected elements of the FAC (AP 24 Sept. 1998; International Crisis Group 21 Oct. 1998, 3-5). The 10th and 12th battalions of the FAC, stationed in North and South Kivu, were the first to throw their support behind the rebels (Jeune Afrique 1-7 Sept. 1998, 16; Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 2). On 4 August 1998, two days after the start of the fighting, several thousand of the 20,000-30,000 members of the former Zairian Armed Forces (Forces armées zairoises—FAZ) in the Kitona military base located on the southwest coast of the country joined the rebellion (Africa Confidential 28 Aug. 1998, 5; New African Oct. 1998a, 11) when a rebel commando hijacked a plane at the Goma airport and flew it to the Kitona military base in a bid to win over the soldiers, who were undergoing a [translation] "reeducation" programme there (Africa Research Bulletin 1-31 Aug. 1998, 13222; Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 2; Africa Confidential 28 Aug. 1998, 5). Sources estimate that early in the war, the rebel forces had 50,000-60,000 members (Le Soir 28 Aug. 1998; Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 3; Reuters 16 Oct. 1998).


Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, the RCD president (Jeune Afrique 1-7 Sept. 1998, 17-18; New African Oct. 1998a, 13), is a native of Lower Congo (ibid.; Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 6) and formerly a professor at Dar es Salaam University in Tanzania (ibid.; Jeune Afrique 1-7 Sept. 1998, 17-18; Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 6). Jacques Depelchin, the executive secretary of the RCD (ibid.), was formerly a professor at a Protestant university in Kinshasa (ibid.).


In addition, the RCD includes three Tutsis from the Kivu region who were high-ranking officials in the Kabila regime before the rebellion: Déogratias Bugera, Bizima Karaha and Moïse Nyarugabo (International Crisis Group 21 Oct. 1998, 6). Bugera, a founding member and former secretary general of Kabila's AFDL (ibid.; Jeune Afrique 1-7 Sept. 1998, 17-18), was a minister of state without portfolio (Africa Confidential 28 Aug. 1998, 5; International Crisis Group 21 Oct. 1998, 6). Karaha, also a former AFDL member, was the minister of foreign affairs (Africa Confidential 28 Aug. 1998, 5; Jeune Afrique 1-7 Sept. 1998, 17-18), and Nyarugabo, another former AFDL member, was President Kabila's private secretary (Africa Confidential 28 Aug. 1998, 5; International Crisis Group 21 Oct. 1998, 6) and, according to one source, his political adviser (Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 6).

Two other former AFDL members in the RCD who occupied high-ranking positions under the
3.3 Role of Mobutu-era Civil and Military Officials in the Current Conflict

The sources consulted by the Research Directorate provide little information on the role and place of Mobutu-era civil and military leaders in the conflict that erupted on 2 August 1998. Apart from the former ministers identified in the preceding section as being official members of the RCD's political leadership, most of the former high-ranking officials of the Mobutu regime have maintained a low profile since the start of the war.

Africa Confidential reports that former prime minister Kengo wa Dondo and generals Kpama Baramoto Kata and Nzimbi Ngbale Kongo wa Bassa have visited Kigali, an act that suggests they have decided to side with the rebels (28 Aug. 1998, 5). Members of the former FAZ who were undergoing "reeducation" in the Kitona base were reportedly urged by the two generals to join the rebellion (ibid.). In its 11 September 1998 issue, the same magazine reports that members of Mobutu's Special Presidential Division (Division spéciale présidentielle—DSP) played a crucial role in the rebels' capture of the town of Kalemie (ibid. 11 Sept. 1998, 4).

However, a number of other former FAZ generals threw their support behind President Kabila early in the conflict (Jeune Afrique Économie 14 Sept.-4 Oct. 1998, 22; Reuters 15 Sept. 1998). One of them is General Kalume, who was the chief of military operations in mid-September 1998 (Jeune Afrique Économie 14 Sept.-4 Oct. 1998, 22). According to Reuters, three other former FAZ generals—Mulimbi Mabilo, Bekazwa Bakundulo and Ngwala Panzu—were, as of mid-September 1998, leading the fight against the rebellion in Katanga province (15 Sept. 1998). In August 1998, General Eluki Monga Ahundu, former chief of staff of the FAZ, urged the soldiers who had formerly served under him to support the Kinshasa government in its war against the rebels in the eastern part of the country (Africa No. 1 8 Aug. 1998).

At the same time, several former FAZ soldiers have reportedly been targetted by the authorities as a result of the war (ASADHO 9 Sept. 1998, 2). The African Human Rights Association (ASADHO) claimed in a 9 September 1998 press release that the government had arrested more that 500 ex-FAZ soldiers in Kinshasa (ibid.). The press release adds that some of them have disappeared (ibid.). According to Info-CongoKinshasa (see Notes on Selected Sources), an eye-witness apparently reported seeing the summary execution of 30 ex-FAZ soldiers (31 Aug. 1998, 7). These ex-FAZ soldiers were reportedly arrested and accused of complicity with the rebels purely on the basis of suspicion (ibid.).

4. FOREIGN INTERVENTIONS

What initially appeared to be a simple mutiny rapidly escalated into a regional conflict with the direct involvement of countries including Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Chad (Xinhua 8 Oct. 1998; Le Soir 28 Aug. 1998; AP 22 Sept. 1998; International Crisis Group 21 Oct. 1998, 1-10; Mail&Guardian 29 July 1998). This section will try to clarify who supports whom and why
these countries have become involved in the DRC conflict.

4.1. Pro-Kabila Interventions

By 13 August 1998, two weeks after the start of the war, the rebels controlled all the towns on the country's southwestern coast (Muamba, Banana, Boma and Matadi); in addition, they had captured the Inga dam, the main source of electricity for Kinshasa and other localities (Africa Research Bulletin 1-31 Aug. 1998, 13222; AFP 31 Aug. 1998; New African Oct. 1998a, 11).

According to sources, analysts believe that without the intervention of Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia, Kinshasa would have been captured by the rebels (Xinhua 8 Oct. 1998; Africa Research Bulletin 1-31 Aug. 1998, 13222; New African Oct. 1998b, 14-15). These three countries are, like the DRC, members of the South African Development Community (SADC) and have officially acknowledged their military intervention in support of Kabila (AFP 29 Sept. 1998a; Libération 30 Sept. 1998; International Crisis Group 21 Oct. 1998, 1-10). They justify their intervention by the need to defend a fellow SADC member from the aggression of Rwanda and Uganda, two non-SADC countries (Africa Research Bulletin 1-31 Aug. 1998, 13222; AFP 20 Oct. 1998a).

However, some observers suggest that Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia each has its own reasons for intervening. In the case of Angola, the primary objective was to prevent Jonas Savimbi's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the main armed opposition to the Luanda regime, from using Congolese territory as a base for its operations (Reuters 3 Oct. 1998, 2; Jeune Afrique 22-28 Sept. 1998a, 13; International Crisis Group 21 Oct. 1998, 10-11). Zimbabwe and Namibia have economic interests in the DRC that they wish to defend, safeguard and promote (AFP 7 Oct. 1998, 1-2; International Crisis Group Oct. 1998, 8-9; Reuters 3 Oct. 1998). In addition, Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe's [translation] "concerns about his personal prestige" played a role in his intervention (ibid.).


4.2. Pro-rebel Interventions

The Ugandan government admits sending soldiers to eastern DRC, but claims that it did so to ensure its own security by preventing Ugandan rebels based there from infiltrating into Uganda (Reuters 3 Oct. 1998; Africa Research Bulletin 1-31 Aug. 1998, 13223; International Crisis Group 21 Oct. 1998, 5-6). It denies that Ugandan troops are involved in the Congolese conflict (ibid.). The Rwandan authorities, after their initial categorical denials of any intervention in the DRC (Jeune Afrique 22-28 Sept. 1998a, 13; Reuters 3 Oct. 1998; AP 13 Oct. 1998), eventually acknowledged three months after the start of the war that they were maintaining a military presence in the DRC for the purpose of ensuring Rwandan security (AFP 6 Nov. 1998; AP 6 Nov. 1998). Eye-witnesses had already reported the presence of Rwandan soldiers among the rebel forces when the rebels captured of the town of Kindu (AP 13 Oct. 1998; Reuters 14 Oct. 1998; AFP 14 Oct. 1998).

Rwanda and Uganda share similar border security concerns (Jeune Afrique 22-28 Sept. 1998a, 13; Reuters 3 Oct. 1998, 2). The Rwandan authorities feel threatened by the Hutu Interahamwe militia force and former FAR soldiers based in the Kivu region who continue to make deadly raids into

In addition, Belgium has accused Burundi of sending soldiers to the Uvira area in South Kivu with the intention of supporting the anti-Kabila rebels (Le Soir 16 Sept. 1998, 2). Colonel Songolo, a former army commander in Katanga who has joined the rebels, states that Kabila has obtained the support of members of the Burundian Hutu militia forces that are fighting to overthrow the Burundian government in Bujumbura (Reuters 20 Oct. 1998a).

5. IMPACT OF THE CONFLICT ON VARIOUS GROUPS

Congolese civilians in general have suffered from the war that broke out on 2 August 1998; among other things, sources report that aerial bombing by the Angolan forces during their intervention on the southwestern front caused thousands of civilian deaths (Africa Confidential 11 Sept. 1998, 4; ASADHO 9 Sept. 1998, 2). More that 5 million Kinshasa residents were deprived of electricity and drinking water for several weeks following the rebel capture of the Inga dam (Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 7; ASADHO 9 Sept. 1998, 2; La Voix du CDH 27 Aug. 1998, 12).

In the eastern and western regions of the country, the war has displaced significant numbers of people. According to a mid-October 1998 UNHCR press release, more than 11,000 Congolese refugees had already fled to Tanzania and more than 6,000 to Burundi (13 Oct. 1998). All these people were from the town of Kalemie in Katanga province (ibid.). A number of sources report that several people were killed by rebel soldiers, some of them because they had refused to support the rebels (CADDHOM 5 Oct. 1998, 1; La Voix du CDH 27 Aug. 1998, 12).

This section looks at the situation of individuals and groups who have been targets of ill-treatment by the warring parties because of their ethnicity, political opinions or positions.

5.1. Ethnic Groups

5.1.1. Tutsis

From the beginning of the conflict, the DRC government labelled the Rwandans and Banyamulenge as "aggressors" (Le Monde 26 Aug. 1998, 4). According to sources, this explains the "Tutsi hunt" subsequently organized by the Congolese authorities in Kinshasa (ibid.; Info-CongoKinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 3). Several hundred ethnic Tutsis, people of Rwandan origin or their spouses, and rebel sympathizers were arrested and detained in Kinshasa as a result (AI 7 Aug. 1998; US Newswire 7 Aug. 1998).

In its 9 September 1998 press release, ASADHO reports that "several people of Tutsi origin were arbitrarily arrested and detained in Camp Kokolo, Tshatshi, in various intelligence service prisons [...] and in the Kin-Mazière prison in Kinshasa Gombe" (2). Sakombi Inongo, who was Kabila's communications adviser at that time, was reportedly quoted in the 24 August 1998 issue of Soft International as saying that "To the Tutsis [...] I announce that the time of perdition, expiation, eternel exile, great misfortune and greatest torments has arrived" (ibid.). Other sources mention that an undetermined number of ethnic Tutsis detained in Kinshasa have been summarily executed (HRW 18 Aug. 1998; PANA 17 Sept. 1998; US Newswire 7 Aug. 1998).
The US Department of State has expressed its concern at the mass arrests of Tutsi Congolese and their ill-treatment at the hands of the Kabila government (M2 Presswire 10 Aug. 1998). Foreign diplomats in the DRC have indicated similar concerns, and are trying to find out the number of places of detention and get permission to visit them (AFP 13 Aug. 1998).

Sources also report that DRC authorities have used the official media to stir up hatred against ethnic Tutsis (HRW 13 Aug. 1998; AI 14 Aug. 1998). In the eastern town of Bunia, for example, the government-controlled radio broadcast an appeal urging people to kill Rwandan Tutsis using any tools at their disposal, from machetes to barbed wire (AFP 14 Aug. 1998; HRW 13 Aug. 1998; BBC 13 Aug. 1998).

According to the 27 August 1998 issue of *La Voix du CDH*, about 300 Tutsis in the town of Lubumbashi (Katanga province) had been arrested since the start of the war and were being detained by the local authorities in a convent run by the Backita congregation (10). Further information on this issue was not available to the Research Directorate at the time of publication of this paper. The report adds that several Banyamulenge in Kalemie, including Sekimonio (an executive of the Bralima brewery and lemonade company) and his family, were executed by the FAC (ibid., 12). The Integrated Regional Information Network for Central and Eastern Africa (IRIN-CEA) of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimated in mid-October that 8,000 to 10,000 Banyamulenge displaced from the Vyura area of Katanga province had reached Kalemie and Uvira or were on their way to these towns (United Nations OCHA IRIN-CEA 13 Oct. 1998). About 250 displaced persons had been killed in Vyura or on the way to Kalemie (ibid.)

In the Eastern Province town of Kisangani, a Christian human rights association called the Justice and Liberation Group (Groupe Justice et Libération) published a 18 September 1998 report entitled *La guerre du Congo à Kisangani et les violations des droits de l'homme du 2 août au 17 septembre 1998* in which it reported several cases of summary executions and disappearances of Tutsis and other Rwandans perceived to be colluding with the rebels (Groupe Justice et Libération 18 Sept. 1998, 6-7).

According to a Reuters report, the Congolese authorities were trying in mid-September 1998 to find a country willing to accept the ethnic Tutsis detained in various Kinshasa military barracks, ostensibly "to protect them from public reprisals" (21 Sept. 1998).

### 5.1.2. People from Katanga

Information on the situation in rebel-controlled zones is difficult to obtain, particularly since several international organizations and human rights activists were forced to leave the region immediately after the war began (*Info-CongoKinshasa* 30 Sept. 1998, 2; HRW 23 Oct. 1998, 1-7). In the zones they control, the Congolese rebels have appropriated all means of communication, food reserves, stocks of medicine and other items belonging to UNICEF and the UN World Food Programme (Reuters 20 Oct. 1998b; United Nations DPI 20 Aug. 1998).

A number of sources report that some Congolese—particularly Katangans—have been captured on the Uvira-Bukavu-Goma road, and taken by force to Rwanda, either because they would not support the rebels or in retaliation for the detention of Tutsis in Kinshasa (*La Voix du CDH* 27 Aug. 1998, 13; ASADHO 9 Sept. 1998, 2; *Info-CongoKinshasa* 31 Aug. 1998, 3). According to *La Voix du CDH*, 356 people were killed between 2 and 8 August 1998 (27 Aug. 1998, 13). In addition, 40 to 50 officers of Katangan origin were summarily executed by the rebel forces in Kavumu during the same period (ibid.; *Info-CongoKinshasa* 31 Aug. 1998, 3).

In the Eastern Province, people who fled the Katangan town of Kisangani before the arrival of the
rebels live in hiding in difficult conditions due to a hate campaign waged against them on the radio by a man named Wale Sombo Bolene (Groupe Justice et Libération 18 Sept. 1998, 9). Further information on Wale Sombo Bolene was not available in the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

5.2. Journalists

Accused of [translation] "setting up a support committee for the rebels in Kinshasa, creating an active and dynamic centre of subversion, rejoicing over each rebel advance and, finally, colluding with the enemy," Semy Dieyi, César Lokate Itoko, Ekofo Isawoso, Prontom Binois, Martin Mazambe and Désiré Kanyama, all journalists with the Congolese National Radio and Television (Radio Télévision Nationale Congolaise—RTNC), were arrested on 8 September 1998 and held at the provincial police inspectorate in Kinshasa for three days before being released (Droits de l'homme Hebdo 21-28 Sept. 1998, 2). According to the same source, César Lokate Itoko, Ekofo Isawoso and Prontom Binois were rearrested, along with Bertrain Etenda Bafenda, on 17 September 1998 and imprisoned in a cell of the Military Detection of Anti-Motherland Activities Unit (Détection militaire des activités anti-patrie—DEMIAP) (ibid.). Other sources report that seven journalists with the official Congolese radio broadcaster Voix du peuple were arrested and detained for the second time on 18 and 19 September 1998 by the military for setting up a welcoming committee for the rebels and colluding with the enemy (United Nations OCHA IRIN-CEA 30 Sept. 1998; AFP 29 Sept. 1998b). Six of the seven journalists were later released "on the personal orders" of President Kabila (ibid.). Information on the seventh journalist could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

The editor of the newspaper Umoja, Raymond Luaula, was arrested by four special service officers of the National Intelligence Agency (Agence nationale des renseignements—ANR) on 23 September 1998, but was later released (Droits de l'homme Hebdo 21-28 Sept. 1998, 3). He was accused of [translation] "sowing panic among the population of Kinshasa" by publishing an article, entitled "Bukavu n'a jamais été bombardée" (Bukavu has never been bombed), which contradicted the government's claim that rebel-held Bukavu had been bombed by pro-government forces (ibid.).

On 5 November 1998, the security forces arrested three journalists employed by the daily newspaper Le Soft, Awazi Kharomon, Lubamba Lukoto and B. B. Ediya, confiscated their equipment and shut down the newspaper's offices (RSF 6 Nov. 1998). They were accused of publishing falsehoods concerning conversations between Kabila and US officials regarding the situation in the country and were detained in the Kinshasa office of the National Security Council (Conseil national de sécurité) (ibid.). Jean-Marie Nkanku, a journalist with the weekly L'Alerte, was arrested on 30 October 1998 by the police for publishing a photo of Interior Minister Gaëtan Kakudji in the company of Z'ahidi Ngoma, a rebel leader (ibid.; La Référence Plus 30 Oct. 1998). According to Reporters sans frontières, he is being held by DEMIAP (11 Nov. 1998). Two journalists employed by La Flamme du Congo, Gustave Kalenga and Kabongo Mbaya, were arrested on 29 October 1998 by plainclothes soldiers in connection with the newspaper's publication, a short time before, of an article about bribery allegations implicating President Kabila's office chief of staff (CPJ 6 Nov. 1998; RSF 6 Nov. 1998). The same day, Beya Mukoto, a journalist with the weekly Destinée, published in Kananga, Kasai province, was arrested in Kananga. A week later, he was still in police detention for translating and publishing an article critical of Kasai's governor that had previously appeared in Le Potentiel (RSF 6 Nov. 1998).

Several foreign journalists were also arrested and detained by Congolese police in August 1998 (Reporters sans frontières 28 Aug. 1998, 1; South African News Agency 25 Aug. 1998; Xinhua 24 Aug. 1998). Among them were Lara Santoro, an Italian journalist working for The Christian Science Monitor, and AFP correspondent Hugh Neville, both of whom were arrested by Congolese officials at the Kasumbalesa border post on the DRC-Zambia border on 20 August 1998, accused of spying and
expelled from the country after being detained for several days (Xinhua 24 Aug. 1998; RSF 28 Aug. 1998). Other foreign journalists who were arrested include World Television News and Reuters correspondents (South African News Agency 25 Aug. 1998; RSF 28 Aug. 1998). The World Television News correspondents, identified by Reporters sans frontières as Australian Mike Huggins, German Michael Pohl and Congolese Jonathan Kolionio, were arrested by police on 23 August 1998 as they were filming a scene in the streets of Kinshasa; they were released on 25 August 1998 (ibid.). The Reuters correspondents, identified as Roger Koy and Sip Maseko, were held in custody for several hours on 24 August 1998 on the orders of the information minister (ibid.).

In another case, on 7 August 1998, Jean Hatzfel, a special correspondent of the French newspaper Libération, was "violently accosted by two [Congolese] soldiers, thrown to the ground several times, beaten up and threatened with summary execution before being taken to barracks"; he was accused of spying (Libération 8 Sept. 1998). However, he was released the same day on the orders of the information minister (ibid.).

5.3. Political Opposition


In general, however, although the documentary sources consulted provide little information on the situation of political party members since the start of the war, oral sources report that no party member has been ill-treated, arrested or detained either by the authorities or by the rebels simply for belonging to a particular political party (Mwene Kabyana 14 Oct. 1998; Tchibeya 9 Oct. 1998; Ngefa 8 Oct. 1998).


In an 18 September 1998 press release, Damien Simbi Musema, the secretary general of the Christian Social Democratic Party (Parti démocrate social chrétien—PDSC), called for "a dialogue among all the forces of change 'in order to achieve increased national cohesion and arrive at a solution to the problem of the war, a concerted management of the transition, and the reconstruction of the country'" (Info-CongoKinshasa 30 Sept. 1998, 6).

5.4. Human Rights Activists

In the rebel-controlled zones, "human rights associations operate clandestinely for fear of possible retaliation by the new occupants" (Droits de l'homme Hebdo 28 Sept.-3 Oct. 1998, 5). In a 23 October 1998 memorandum, Human Rights Watch (HRW) listed several human rights activists forced into exile after receiving death threats from rebel soldiers for informing the rest of the
population about the situation in the rebel-occupied zones (23 Oct. 1998, 1-4). Even humanitarian agencies have had to leave the rebel-controlled zones since all their equipment was confiscated, including the communications equipment they used in their work (Reuters 20 Oct. 1998b).

In its report on human rights abuses committed by the warring parties between 2 August and 17 September 1998, Groupe Justice et Libération writes that in Kisangani, however, [translation] "as far as the activities of human rights associations are concerned, nobody was directly harassed by either the government forces or the insurgent forces (18 Sept. 1998, 5). At the same time, according to the president of the human rights organization Voice for the Voiceless for the Defence of Human Rights (VSV), human rights activists are finding it increasingly difficult to work in Kinshasa as a result of the war (9 Oct. 1998). However, VSV was not aware of any cases of human rights activists being arrested or intimidated by the authorities (ibid.).

5.5. Other Groups

5.5.1. Children

According to Human Rights Watch, the DRC authorities have urged children between 12 and 20 years of age to join the FAC, which are involved in fighting against the rebellion in the DRC (AFP 12 Aug. 1998; Info-Congokinshasa 31 Aug. 1998, 7). As of early September 1998, many children were already serving as soldiers, both in the FAC and in the rebel forces, and both sides were continuing to recruit children to fight in the war (ibid.; ASADHO 9 Sept. 1998, 3).

In its report on human rights violations committed by the two sides between 2 August and 17 September 1998, the Groupe Justice et Libération, indicates that the government forces in Kisangani [translation] "have used anti-Rwandan propaganda and the promise of good wages to enrol numerous youths, including children under 15 years of age" (18 Sept. 1998, 11). The report adds that the rebel forces also included children under 15 (ibid.). Rebel military leaders estimated that a total of some 5,000 children were fighting in the current war for one side or the other (AFP 8 Oct. 1998; M2 Presswire 24 Aug. 1998).

5.5.2. Family Members and Close Collaborators with Rebel or Government Leaders

In a 5 October 1998 report, The Action Collective for the Development of Human Rights in Congo-Kinshasa (Collectif d’actions pour le développement des droits de l’homme au Congo-Kinshasa —CADDHOM) lists kidnappings, disappearances and killings carried out by the rebel forces in South Kivu province, particularly in the town of Bukavu (1). CADDHOM adds that the targets are [translation] "Congolese of Hutu origin, students, civil society leaders, members of the clergy and former officials of the Kabila regime who are suspected of collusion with Kinshasa" (5 Oct. 1998, 1-2). Former South Kivu governor Jean-Charles Magabe was forced to flee the country after refusing to obey the rebels; he has taken refuge in Belgium (Libération 21 Oct. 1998). According to Human Rights Watch, the traditional chiefs in South Kivu who have refused to collaborate with the rebels have gone underground to avoid being arrested (23 Oct. 1998, 3). The source cites the cases of Chief Désiré Kabare, who lives in the town of the same name, Chief Pierre Ndabadaye of Walengu, King Longangi of Kitutu and King Kalenge of Mwenga (ibid.).

Family members of current RCD coordinator Lunda Bululu have been arrested and detained by the National Intelligence Agency (ANR) in Lubumbashi for varying periods (La Voix du CDH 27 Aug. 1998, 10). FAC soldiers pillaged Lunda Bululu’s residence in the Jamaïque district of Kintambo.
Commune as well as the residence of former prime minister Kengo wa Dondo, who was suspected of being a rebel collaborator (Droits de l'homme Hebdo 28 Sept.- 3 Oct. 1998, 3).

6. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The current situation in the DRC is such that it is difficult to make predictions about the outcome of the war and the country's future. After close to three months of civil war, two different administrations ruled the country, with the rebels occupying South and North Kivu, the Eastern Province, Maniema, and a part of Katanga province and the Kabila government controlling the rest of the country (Jeune Afrique 22-28 Sept. 1998b, 11; AFP 15 Oct. 1998; Reuters 15 Oct. 1998). This section presents some of the possible scenarios as discussed by various sources.

The Current Balance of Power Continues

One Side or the Other Wins a Military Victory
A victory by either side would carry the risk of reinforcing the distrust between the two groups without ending the threat of destabilization that hangs over the entire region; in particular, as the International Crisis Group points out, a military victory by the government forces would reinforce [translation] "Kabila's desire not to share power and [would] encourage him to become more authoritarian" (21 Oct. 1998, 14).

The Fighting Ends and Negotiations Begin
The cessation of hostilities and the start of negotiations among the various parties, including the democratic opposition, seem to offer the best prospects for the DRC (International Crisis Group 21 Oct. 1998, 16). This kind of peaceful negotiated resolution of the conflict is favoured by a number of groups, including political parties such as the UDPS (Jeune Afrique 29 Sept.-5 Oct. 1998, 9; Info-CongoKinshasa 30 Sept. 1998, 6) and the PDSC (Info-CongoKinshasa 30 Sept. 1998, 6), the Conference of Catholic Bishops in the DRC (CNN 7 Nov. 1998) and human rights organizations such as ASADHO (ASADHO 8 Nov. 1998). Under the auspices of the UN and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), such negotiations could lead to the establishment of a transitional government, followed by free and democratic elections (ibid.; CNN 7 Nov. 1998).

NOTES ON SELECTED SOURCES

Droits de l'homme Hebdo (Kinshasa)

Collectif d'actions pour le développement des droits de l'homme au Congo-Kinshasa (CADDHOM).
Founded in 1991, this independent human rights organization, whose name can be translated as the Action Collective for the Development of Human Rights in Congo-Kinshasa, has its headquarters in the mining town of Kamitunga and a coordination office in the South Kivu town of Bukavu, and is also represented by offices in various regions of the country. It publishes reports and press releases on the human rights situation in the DRC.

**Groupe Justice et Libération (Kisangani)**
This Christian human rights association, whose name can be translated as Justice and Liberation Group, is based in Kisangani, in the Eastern province, and was founded in 1990 with the aim of monitoring human rights conditions in the Eastern province. In addition to its annual reports, it also publishes other documents.

**Mwene Kabyana, Kadari**
A native of Congo, Mwene Kabyana has a master's degree in political science from the University of Montréal and is doing research for a Ph. D. in the same field at Laval University in Québec. Since 1994, Mwene Kabyana has been contributing to *Info-Zaïre* (later renamed *Info-CongoKinshasa*), a monthly publication produced in Montreal by the Roundtable on Human Rights in the DRC (Table de concertation des droits humains en RDC). In addition, he is a spokesman for the UDPS, a prominent DRC political party.

**Ngefa, Guillaume**
Guillaume Ngefa is the president of the African Association for Human Rights in Congo-Kinshasa (Association africaine de défense des droits de l'homme au CongoKinshasa-ASADHO), formerly known as the Zairian Association of Human Rights (Association zaïroise de défense des droits de l'homme—AZADHO). The Association was created in 1991 and publishes a human rights bulletin as well as an annual report that reviews the human rights situation in the country. Banned by the Kabila regime in February 1998, ASADHO has gone underground, and some of its leaders, including its president, have been forced into exile.

**Tchibeya, Floribert**

**La Voix du Centre des droits de l'homme et du droit humanitaire (CDH) (Lubumbashi)**
This monthly periodical about human rights in Katanga province is published by the Lubumbashi Centre for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, founded in 1993.

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