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# SPECIAL REPORT

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## ABOUT THE REPORT

In 2009 and 2010, the U.S. Institute of Peace sponsored a series of dialogue sessions between members of the Democratic Republic of the Congo diaspora community and those of the international community. These meetings provided a forum for the DRC diaspora to exchange views and suggest solutions to challenges facing their country with senior officials and representatives from U.S. government agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), think tanks, and universities. Diaspora communities from North America, Africa, and Europe were represented.<sup>1</sup> Born in eastern Congo, Kitenge N’Gambwa has worked as an educator in the Congo and the United States for much of his professional life. Currently, he is the director of a writing, reading, and language center at Montgomery College, MD, where he also teaches English. He has also worked as the education sector specialist at the U.S. Peace Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C., chief of party for the Education Development Center (EDC) in Tanzania and senior technical adviser for education in emergency situations at the International Rescue Committee. Dr. N’Gambwa holds a BA in applied linguistics from the Bukavu Teacher Training College, an MSc in education administration from California State University, Hayward, and an MPhil in comparative and international education and a PhD in politics and education from Columbia University.<sup>2</sup>

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*Edited by Kitenge N’Gambwa*

## Leadership, Peace, Stability, and Prosperity in the DRC

### Summary

- Since the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) gained its independence in 1960, the country’s leadership has been lacking three attributes of the utmost importance to the country’s welfare: a real vision for the DRC’s future, the competence and ability to execute the vision, and the character needed to ensure the realization of the vision with sound judgment, integrity, and equity.
- To break from the DRC’s past patterns of poor governance, a clear and practical vision for the country’s future must be articulated and implemented, requiring concerted effort from a new and energized leadership. This type of leadership should come from the Congolese people—both those living in the country and those who are part of its far-flung diaspora.
- Opportunities and avenues for reform include revamping democratic governance and electoral reform, promoting economic growth by moving beyond aid and creating a favorable environment for investment, reforming the mining sector, improving the health and education systems, and strengthening the DRC’s judiciary.
- A well-organized and invigorated Congolese diaspora can join with Congolese living in the DRC to work toward the reforms. The upcoming elections in November 2011 offer a chance to step up these organizational and advocacy efforts.

Fifty years after gaining its independence from Belgium, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) remains plagued by continuing governance challenges, corruption, insecurity, and widespread poverty. State institutions are generally weak, and efforts to bring lasting peace and security have so far produced mixed results. While the western part of the country enjoys relative calm, violent conflict persists in much of the eastern DRC, perpetrated by armed militias, domestic and foreign. Much of the instability and insecurity is related to the mismanagement and plunder of the country’s natural resources, notably tin ores and gold.

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Why has the DRC not been able to use its immense natural resources to improve human security and its citizens' quality of life? Why has the Congolese government not been able to effectively exercise its authority in the most conflict-prone regions? Answers to these questions vary, but consensus has emerged among many scholars and practitioners that there is a leadership deficit at all levels of Congolese society. This paper investigates how members of the Congolese diaspora and other relevant stakeholders can address this problem.

Since independence, various governments have failed to meet the deep-seated political, economic, and social challenges facing the Congolese people. By and large, the state has not fulfilled its most fundamental duties, namely the provision of peace and security to all citizens and the protection of the entirety of the DRC's territory, including land and maritime areas. Joseph Kasa-Vubu, the DRC's first president, presided over a chaotic post-independence period and was unable to stabilize the country, leading to his ouster by Mobutu Sese Seko in 1965. The Mobutu era, which started with promises of peace and prosperity, became synonymous with corruption, repression, and failed social and economic programs.

Mobutu's successor, Laurent-Désiré Kabila, also had an agenda for the DRC: When he proclaimed himself president in 1997, he promised to bring peace and stability to the country and improve the lives of millions of his fellow Congolese. At the time of his death in 2001, peace had not been restored, and misery remained a way of life. President Joseph Kabila, who ascended to power after the death of the first Kabila, has been in office for a decade. He also has promised to bring peace and reconstruction and deserves to be credited with bringing political stability and calm to much of the country, thanks to his political pragmatism. But he too has not been successful in pacifying the entire country, as lasting peace remains elusive in the east. Also, recent events in Equateur Province and skirmishes on the Angolan border point to the challenges the Kabila government faces in securing the country. Ambitious construction projects are under way in parts of the country, including Kinshasa. However, it remains to be seen whether or not Les Cinq Chantiers, Mr. Kabila's signature development program, will be completed as planned. The water and electricity sectors, for instance, continue to pose serious challenges to his administration.

Two of the DRC's last three heads of state—Mobutu and Laurent Kabila—failed to deliver on the promises they made. Part of the problem for both presidents can be attributed to incompetence. Another issue was accountability, as Mobutu and Laurent Kabila both came to power through force and were not responsive to the Congolese people. A deficit of character was definitely an issue for Mobutu: He condoned corruption, encouraged violence, and believed that he owed the Congolese nation nothing.<sup>3</sup>

The jury is still out for Joseph Kabila's presidency. Mr. Kabila came to power through elections after a transitional period and has the opportunity to be an effective leader. In fairness, the problems he inherited from the previous administrations are enormous. But his ability to fight poverty, improve living conditions for Congolese, and provide lasting peace and security will depend on his willingness to lead by example by getting rid of corrupt officials in his administration, enforce existing laws, and strengthen all state institutions, including the security forces.

Meanwhile, the DRC's decades of civil war, political unrest, and weak socioeconomic progress sustained a wave of emigration from the country, primarily to neighboring countries, Europe, and the United States. Although precise data are unavailable, there is general agreement that hundreds of thousands of Congolese emigrated between 1990 and 2010, leaving a substantial gap in the country's labor force. These expatriate communities, who maintain a memory or vision of their homeland and are committed to its political, social, and economic reform, are broadly referred to as the diaspora.<sup>4</sup>

Some researchers describe diaspora communities as an "untapped resource for development."<sup>5</sup> Others caution that they could be agents of unrest.<sup>6</sup> It is often difficult to discern

the motivations of individuals or groups. Research highlights the difficulties in establishing common goals among diaspora groups because emotional and social factors are often more important than financial benefits in deciding how and when to act.<sup>7</sup> However, despite these challenges, there is a growing consensus that these communities could contribute to peace-building by investing resources strategically, supporting specific initiatives, and transferring skills and technology. Moreover, effective diaspora engagement could have a powerful signaling effect on external stakeholders to participate in peace efforts and support political stability in order to promote economic investment. Such engagement could indicate the degree of confidence the diaspora community has in its country's prospects.

## Leadership and Governance

Since the DRC's independence on June 30, 1960, the country's leadership has lacked three attributes of the utmost importance to the country's welfare: a real vision for the DRC's future, as opposed to agendas and projects; the competence and ability to execute the vision; and finally, the character needed to ensure the realization of the vision with sound judgment, integrity, and equity.<sup>8</sup> Ideas for a national agenda among the DRC's presidents have been vague and unrealistic. Mobutu's *Le Manifeste de la N'Sele* in 1967 and *Objectif 80*, both of which promised to make Zaire, now the DRC, the best country among African countries, lacked strict implementation and gradually came to be regarded as wish lists rather than political programs. Often the leadership used symbolic gestures and slogans in place of substantive action to pacify the Congolese people with the illusion of progress. All of this historically has been conceived amid corruption, violence, and limited accountability.

The most recent era of Congolese leadership, dominated first by Laurent-Désiré Kabila, then by Joseph Kabila, has not yet been able to fundamentally change the dynamic that Mobutu created. The second Kabila's *Les Cinq Chantiers* program aims to address five sectors: infrastructure (e.g., roads, rails, and bridges); job creation through investment; health care and education (e.g., rebuilding schools and universities, equipping and modernizing hospitals); water and electricity; and housing. A closer look at this program, however, leaves many wondering what the measurable objectives really are. Is there any overall vision that these activities are meant to support? What are the goals and what is the time frame? What would be their effects and for how long would they last? Who is carrying out the work, and how much is this costing the DRC? Is it value for money for the Congolese people? Are these programs sustainable and how are they being financed? Finally, what would be their legacy?

To break from the DRC's past patterns of poor governance, a clear and practical vision for the country's future must be articulated. Appropriate metrics must be identified, and reformative leadership must become part of the discourse. A starting point for the DRC could involve all stakeholders working toward a peaceful, politically stable, and economically prosperous DRC, requiring a structured and vibrant economic system. When combined, the principles of stability and prosperity can mutually reinforce one another and ensure continued development—but this depends on a leadership that espouses integrity, equity, benevolence, judgment, morality, ethics, and meritocracy, while being demonstrably committed to advancing the rule of law, public trust, international cooperation, and legitimacy.

The resounding theme of this report is one of renewing and reinvigorating approaches to leadership in the DRC. The Congolese diaspora can be crucial by continuing to assist in national project implementation as well as committing to serve, where appropriate, as the leaders that the DRC needs. The diaspora's international perspectives have the potential of improving the DRC's chances of breaking the dynamic of poor vision, ability, and character. The upcoming November 2011 elections offer a golden opportunity for the Congolese diaspora to show leadership by participating in different levels of its organization and implementation.

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## **An Agenda for Change**

### ***Improving Democratic Governance***

Like many African countries, the DRC faces numerous challenges as it experiments with democracy. The organization of free and fair elections particularly tests the ability of the Congolese leadership to effectively run the country while honoring the will of the people. The 2006 elections were the first organized multiparty polls at the national and provincial levels since 1959. This means that a political culture of free, fair, and transparent elections had not existed in the DRC for more than forty years. This explains, in part, some of the challenges to and flaws in the 2006 process, among them insufficient polling stations, vote irregularities in some areas, and insufficient monitoring and observation. With the 2011 elections on the horizon, there are several lessons to be learned from the 2006 process that ought to greatly enhance the success and durability of free and fair elections.

In an ominous sign, however, a January 2011 constitutional amendment stipulated that there should be only one round of presidential elections, instead of the two rounds that were held before. Although a two-round process does not guarantee free and fair elections, it has the potential of making fraud more difficult. Also, the winner of the second round should rightfully claim solid popular support, after having been tested twice. Finally, the financial reason that the majority in parliament gave to justify the change was not convincing to many observers. The January 2011 amendment is thus a serious blow to the broad-based legitimacy that must underpin an electoral process, and it may be a prelude to more such amendments. In fact, it is speculated that the government is seeking to change the constitution to limit the age of presidential candidates and require political parties to have been in existence for a certain number of years before fielding a candidate for president.<sup>9</sup> Such changes would appear to favor one side over others, and every effort should be made to avoid this. Constitutional amendments carried out at will could significantly undermine the credibility of the electoral process.

***Constitutional amendments carried out at will could significantly undermine the credibility of the electoral process.***

The recent revelations made in *Le Phare*, a Congolese newspaper,<sup>10</sup> are a reminder of the challenges faced by the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) and the other agencies helping CENI. According to *Le Phare*, millions of names of registered voters were missing on CDs that came from several electoral districts. These CDs, when opened in Kinshasa, were found to be empty. The problem was attributed to computer malfunction. Meanwhile, tensions persist among members of the CENI, *Le Phare* alleges, indicating that an emergency meeting was in the works to calm the situation between Jacques Djoli and Laurent Ndaye, two high-ranking members of the CENI, on the one hand, and CENI president Pastor Ngoy Mulunda on the other. The latter is accused of being dictatorial in his management style. With less than three months before the November 28 elections, such technical glitches and squabbling among CENI leaders ought to be avoided for the elections to be conducted as smoothly as possible.

### ***Suggestions for Free and Fair Elections***

The DRC leadership, which adopted the Africa Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Good Governance in July 2002, should adhere to the principles of this charter throughout the entire electoral process:

- Constitutional authority over elections: As previously argued, the constitution, as the law of the land, must shape elections, and amendments to this important document should be made sparingly.
- Timely implementation of the electoral calendar.
- Respect for the freedom of speech and guarantee of security: Allegations of harassment and arbitrary arrests of political opponents across the country, particularly the arrest of Eugene

Diomi Ndongala, a presumed presidential candidate, send a chilling message to those who wish to participate in the DRC's political process. The government—and the Interior Ministry in particular—should ensure that Congolese can exercise their freedoms of speech, assembly, and political association without fear of repression or intimidation.

Several legislative and institutional measures can enshrine free and fair election processes into clarified legal procedures:

- establishing an effective and nondiscriminatory procedure for voter registration, including qualification criteria such as age, citizenship status, and residence;
- facilitating the creation and free operation of political parties, ensuring the separation of party and state, and establishing the conditions for competition in legislative elections on an equitable basis; and
- conducting a demographic census before the 2011 elections—the CENI can use the local administration, churches, mosques, and other organizations to conduct a comprehensive, accurate census of the population.

Along with legal reform, several policy approaches will enhance citizen participation and civic leader competency during the electoral process:

- initiating or facilitating national programs of civic education to ensure that populations are familiar with election procedures;
- overseeing the training of election officials at all levels, including adherence to ethical conduct, and taking swift corrective measures against recalcitrant officials;
- ensuring the integrity of the electoral process to prevent irregularities, such as ballot stuffing, intimidation, and other forms of voting fraud;
- ensuring that trained personnel at the polling stations undertake the ballot counting and that the results are officially published and subject to monitoring and impartial verification by duly accredited observers;
- taking the necessary measures to ensure that all parties, candidates, and supporters enjoy equal security;
- protecting freedoms of movement, assembly, association, and expression, particularly for political rallies and meetings;
- guaranteeing nonpartisan coverage of the elections in public media.

### ***Promoting Economic Growth and Prosperity***

Sound governance is considered one of the most crucial components of economic development.<sup>11</sup> Good governance implies competent management of a country's resources and affairs in a manner that is open, accountable, equitable, and responsive to the present and future needs of society. The use of this authority—political, economic, and administrative—is meant to facilitate a process through which citizens and groups can articulate their interests, meet their obligations, exercise their legal rights, and mediate differences. Although the government is a key actor in this process, it is one of many. Other actors include associations of farmers, cooperatives, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), religious leaders, financial institutions, political parties, media, lobbyists, international donors, and multinational corporations. Thus, if good governance is a precursor to sustainable economic development in the DRC, every actor in society must meet challenges to governance and contribute to improving it.

Currently, the DRC's record regarding good governance principles is poor. The DRC is known for the mismanagement of its resources, the incompetence of its leadership, and corruption. The basic needs of the Congolese majority go unmet while an elite minority benefits economically from special status connections to the government. Congolese institutions are still

corrupt, and cronyism permeates a coopted judiciary. Finally, the lack of a democratic culture, in terms of both process and participation, and the lack of consensus in decision-making processes at all levels in the DRC perpetuate ineffective and exclusive governance.

### ***Suggestions for Improving Economic Governance***

Being honest about the DRC's many challenges is the first step toward substantive governance reform. The second step entails crucial involvement from the DRC government at all levels.

- **Administrative authority:** Human development and capacity building can be improved by training and retooling the Congolese workforce through formal education or professional development. Implementing an efficient decentralization process would empower local entities and ensure that local resources benefit rural communities and their economies.
- **Political authority:** Effective legislative and judicial laws and executive policies should reinforce political freedoms of speech and participation. Adjusting political officials' salaries to competitive civil service levels is likely to restore confidence in the government.
- **Economic authority:** The DRC must ensure territorial integrity, develop infrastructure, and combat inequality by investing in human capital. The reliable delivery of social services, including quality education and healthcare for all, along with regular payments of living wages to all civil servants, will go a long way toward meeting the basic needs of the Congolese people.

### **Moving beyond Foreign Aid**

The economic history of the DRC contains many sobering legacies: slavery, a rubber-driven genocide, and, most recently, a mineral resources–fueled conflict maintained by domestic as well foreign saboteurs. Each devastating episode has left the government incapacitated, the citizens demoralized, and the hope for a prosperous future bleak. International institutions, such as the United Nations, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund, have attempted to bring peace, stimulate growth, and build infrastructure. However, progress has often been unsustainable, and aid has focused primarily on specific humanitarian causes. Meanwhile, the pressing need of the DRC is to stabilize its resource and production sectors through capacity improvement—that is, the training of a highly technical and scientifically skilled cadre that can effectively manage resources and increase production as needed. The politics of strategically securing and producing crucial resources, such as coltan for high-tech industries and uranium for nuclear development, are relevant to both the DRC and the international community. This interdependence must lead to new and innovative partnerships. With vast resources poised for private investment and an emerging market for effective financing, a more holistic approach can break ground by focusing on investments in the production sector.

### ***Suggestions to Encourage Private Investment***

Again, the need for effective, ethical, and committed leadership is crucial to restoring governance and security to the region in order to create a stable investment environment and allow international partnerships to transition from aid to investment. Prioritizing the following steps can improve investment conditions.

- **Restoring peace and security:** Strengthening the military infrastructure will be a key first step.
- **Developing infrastructure:** The agricultural and mining sectors will yield substantial growth with improved infrastructure.

- Revamping a nationwide banking system: Modernized technology and monitoring systems will improve financial governance and accountability.
- Increasing food security: This can be achieved through improved transportation networks.
- Creating investment funds: Providing small businesses and participants in the informal sector with the necessary access to credit will allow them to transition from the informal to the formal sector.
- Developing the DRC energy program: In particular, the hydroelectric Inga Dam in western DRC, at its optimum capacity, can supply vast amounts of energy.
- Incentivizing diaspora investment: Diaspora investment and involvement are key to the success of productive-sector growth. Members of the Congolese diaspora have professional experience in many sectors at multiple levels of responsibility, the DRC government must develop salary incentives to attract the needed human capital back to the country.

### ***Reforming the Mining Sector***

The DRC's vast mineral reserves include the rarest<sup>12</sup> (e.g., coltan) and most needed in today's technological world. The inability of the state (lack of political will, incompetency, and poor leadership) to prudently manage the efficient production and export of these resources has compounded the crisis that engulfs much of the eastern DRC.<sup>13</sup> Partly due to a culture of impunity, warlords and armed militias, operating at the behest of domestic and international interest groups, have committed horrendous atrocities among the civilian populations in the mineral-rich regions in order to control and exploit their natural resources. As a result, the country's resources fuel civil wars and government corruption instead of building a healthy economy that addresses the needs of the Congolese people.

Much of the mining in the DRC is done in the informal sector by artisanal miners. They have no legal rights or protection, possess no technical training, and use no safety equipment. Congolese and illegal foreign miners work in harsh and hazardous conditions, leaving them extremely vulnerable to armed thugs that often terrorize them, along with the civilian population generally, at will. The lack of governance and security in the industry fuels these conditions and further discourages much needed investment in the sector.

### ***Suggestions for Improving the Mining Sector***

By securing the mining sector, improving work conditions, partnering with investors, enforcing regulations, and producing a well-trained labor force, the production industries of the DRC can begin to positively affect the government, the people, and the stability of the region.

- Setting up an international regulatory committee: Creating an independent regulatory body made up of a predominantly Congolese cadre and international experts from the World Bank and the United Nations would assist the DRC in building sectoral governance capacity. A neutral body of technical experts from around the world could also provide much needed insight, management, and consultative work to ensure long-term stability and development. To avoid government interference, this body should report to a legislative committee.
- Improving mining site conditions: Until a more industrialized mining process is established, there will still be heavy reliance on artisanal miners. During this interim period, all companies mining in the country should submit to a comprehensive audit protocol that clearly outlines procedures ensuring contractual compliance by all parties.
- Creating a partnership between the DRC and investors: The Ministry of Mines and Energy should show leadership by defining a new partnership between the government and investors. It should formalize and streamline administrative procedures.

***The DRC's vast mineral reserves . . . fuel civil wars and government corruption instead of building a healthy economy that addresses the needs of the Congolese people.***

- Recovering fees and taxes: Strictly enforcing the collection of unpaid fees and taxes is a fundamental step toward requiring private-sector accountability. Tax evasion as a result of inaccurate and corrupt export volume readings is extensive. In the Kivu and Oriental provinces, where both mining and mineral exports completely fall outside Congolese government control, all associated revenues are diverted to Rwanda and Uganda. An international consortium, including the DRC, should manage the improved fee collection to prevent fraud and embezzlement. The funds could finance development projects in the DRC and minimize unnecessary foreign loans.
- Establishing an international consortium for industrialization: An international effort must be coordinated to fund the capital investment required to modernize the industry. Establishing an international mining and metallurgical consortium that is open to the international market would attract competent partners who possess the necessary technological and financial capacity.

## **Investing in the Congolese People**

Over the past thirty-five years, there has been a marked decline in the DRC's social indicators. At present, health indicators are characterized by unacceptably high rates of maternal and child mortality, expansion of malaria and other diseases that can be effectively controlled through simple interventions, and low utilization rates of available services. The health-sector budget is insufficient both as a nominal expenditure and as a percentage of the total government budget. In the education sector, dilapidated facilities, teacher strikes, and unsatisfactory budgets are continual obstacles to any meaningful international attempts to improve the education system. As a result, literacy, enrollment, and completion rates are eroding. Despite numerous development grants aimed at curtailing negative trends, the DRC has experienced declines in both primary and secondary educational quality and outcomes.<sup>14</sup>

### ***Suggestions for Improving the Health Sector***

Promoting partnerships among citizens, religious organizations, international donors, and the government (provincial, regional, national) has always been key to health sector performance. To reinvigorate the Congolese health infrastructure, these traditional partners must remain united in objectives and strategies.

- Taking steps to provide quality health care service through regional health care networks has traditionally proven effective in promoting good health and combating preventable diseases.
- Supporting education, advocacy, and financing necessary to increase utilization and maintain operations constitutes a sound investment in a good health care system.

Focusing on these objectives will require projects oriented toward deliverable goods (e.g., facility renovation and construction, equipment, drugs) and services (e.g., advocacy, management, health services). To reinvest in these objectives effectively, the correct leadership positions must be created along with the right leaders to rise to the challenge.

### ***Suggestions for Improving the Education Sector***

Improving educational outcomes requires structural changes across the board at the national, local, administrative, and community levels. The first set of priorities involves improving and expanding access to education.

- School mapping: Conduct regular school-age population censuses, including youth and adults.

- School building: Build and renovate schools according to needs as ascertained by school mapping results, including technical and vocational facilities for adults.
- Distance learning: Incorporate interactive radio instruction (IRI) and other distance education alternatives.
- Creating gender-sensitive and learner-friendly facilities.
- Abolishing school fees: The DRC is legally obligated to grant primary education as a public good and must begin to implement this policy. However, school-fee abolishment should be implemented thoughtfully if it is to produce positive results in efforts to expand access and improve the quality of education. Specifically, the government should anticipate scores of school-age children flocking to school once the fee is abolished. Building new schools and renovating existing ones should be a government priority to avoid overcrowding. Other necessary steps, such as procuring essential didactic resources (e.g., books, lab equipment, and maps) and preparing teachers, must be taken.

Education reforms should extend to revamping the public school curriculum.

- History: A focus on the broad cultural heritage of the DRC will greatly enhance civic and community participation.
- Civic, moral, and peace education: Teachers should engage their students in organic discussions about the rights and responsibilities of citizens, present key symbols of the country and their meanings, discuss forms and branches of government, promote community service, encourage civic engagement, and provide leadership opportunities to their students.
- Entrepreneurship: Students should have opportunities to develop mock business ventures in economics and business classes and apply these lessons to real education-based business ventures.
- Environmental literacy: Teachers should equip students with an understanding of national ecosystems while emphasizing the need for sound economic development that creates jobs while preserving the environment.
- Detracking: The government should gradually abolish the tracking system, eliminate all sections at the secondary school level, and create a general education system. Such a system should aim at exposing all students to a rigorous and challenging math, science, and language curriculum.

Education reform also involves engaging the community.

- Involving parents and students: Promote the involvement of parents in their children's education activities and facilitate the participation of students in the organization of cocurricular activities, clubs, and programs.
- Involving the community: Faith-based organizations, local businesses, and civil leaders must be integrated into school programs. The partnership between businesses and schools can lead to the development of vocational programs that are relevant to the world of work, civic responsibility, and family life.
- Service learning: Give students the opportunity to integrate theoretical knowledge into community service in a way that is meaningful and fosters civic responsibility and engagement; strengthen communities through partnership among all participants in the experience and promote teamwork; and create connections between schools and businesses that graduates can use.

Within the education system, reforms should focus on teacher training, adjusting pay, and reforming the administrative structure.

- Teacher education and training: Create comprehensive training programs in all teacher training colleges and universities that teach learner-centered methodologies and train

prospective teachers in democratic classroom management, including encouraging diverse viewpoints.

- Teacher placement and pay: Gradually replace noncollege-educated teachers with college-educated ones at all levels of the education system. Pay should be commensurate with education and experience.
- A single ministry of education: Create one ministry of education that oversees primary, secondary, and higher education. This will streamline reform and more efficiently coordinate administrative activities.
- Decentralize the education system: Allocate more authority to state and local governments when determining organizational needs, curricula, and learning objectives. This would require a strategic transition period in which state and local teachers and administrators receive appropriate preparation.

### ***Ensuring Peace, Justice, and Security***

The quest for peace and stability within the DRC has a long and painful history. Since gaining independence in 1960, a host of conflicts, civil wars, and secessionist movements have debilitated national infrastructure, shifted power to foreign-backed militia groups, and killed and displaced millions. A great portion of the instability is fostered and fueled by the illicit control, production, and trade of conflict minerals. Given the international implications of the conflict mineral trade and the associated human rights abuses, several international campaigns have aimed at improving security and restoring peace in the DRC. Since 1999, a UN peacekeeping force of nearly 17,000 soldiers has been tasked with mitigating regional violence and providing electoral supervision. However, priorities such as refugee relocation, humanitarian aid, military assistance, political reform, and private investment have differed among the stakeholders in the DRC, leading to ineffective strategies to create peace and stability.

Although the 2006 elections ushered in relative peace and security gains, Congolese citizens continue to face deplorable conditions throughout the country. Eastern DRC in particular is plagued by militia-led rapes, killings, and constant intimidation. The western part of the country enjoys relative calm, but tensions at the borders with Angola and armed conflicts in Equateur Province are a reminder of just how much more work needs to be done to pacify and secure the entire nation. The UN presence notwithstanding, stability will not be achieved until complementary law enforcement and judicial reforms take place. Increasing security measures without political reform will only lead to continued failure and disappointment.

***Priorities such as refugee relocation, humanitarian aid, military assistance, political reform, and private investment have differed among the stakeholders in the DRC, leading to ineffective strategies to create peace and stability.***

### ***Suggestions for Improving the Rule of Law***

Given the long history of ineffective attempts to de-escalate the DRC conflict, a fresh look at the separate yet related scopes of peace, justice, and security is needed to achieve sustainable progress. This requires the following steps:

- Creating a patriotic and republican army: The DRC needs to rebuild its military on the principles of loyalty and national service. In-depth reviews and training can ensure that leaders and commanders are not beholden to foreign interests, uphold the constitution, and submit to civilian authority.
- The demilitarization of the mining sector: Limiting state and military control of the mining industry will stimulate private sector investment and growth. Industrializing this sector will also enhance security and oversight of critical nuclear materials, such as uranium.
- Articulating and implementing a regional peace plan: Creating a joint intelligence gathering system that spans national borders will promote collaboration on a range of issues. Multilateral agreements against regional occupations and interventions are long overdue.

Regional economic pacts based on the respect of the national sovereignty of all member states can strengthen stability.

- Promoting peace education: A regional effort to implement peace education is a key component of reform. The acceptance of diversity (e.g., ethnic, religious, political), appreciation of differing viewpoints, interpersonal communication, peaceful conflict resolution, and environmental protection are integral to this education. Organizations such as the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Institute of Peace can assist in forming such programs while uniquely targeting peace topics to youth throughout the region.
- Appointing judges: There is a large supply of unemployed individuals who have proper legal training. A system must be developed to recruit, place, and fund judges for all required posts.
- Restructuring the justice system: A look at successful paradigms in this sector in Africa and elsewhere may be the best approach in implementing the justice system reform. Such a reform may require establishing several enforcement divisions: administrative police, criminal investigation police, a support and management department, and specialized units.
- Fighting corruption: Ensuring stable salaries for public employees will drastically reduce the need for corrupt practices.
- Creating a professional police force: Law enforcement agents need professional training, equipment, and objectives to create a norm of public security.
- Promoting community-police collaboration: A partnership between police and community leaders will build trust and improve cooperation in communities and neighborhoods.
- Enforcing existing laws: Strict enforcement will improve the business environment by attracting both national and international investors.

## Role of the Diaspora

Diaspora communities have been described as an untapped resource for development. They have also been presented as a group of individuals with strong emotional connections to its homelands and a keen interest in their political, economic, and social welfare. The DRC diaspora has shown, through its advocacy campaigns on behalf of the DRC and other actions, that it is committed to participating in the efforts to find durable solutions to the challenges its homeland faces. More specific steps toward supporting the development of the DRC could be as follows:

- Redefining the Congolese perspective: Members of the diaspora can help citizens understand and advocate for improved social and political conditions. Empowering individuals to challenge abusive and unethical practices has the potential to replace complacency with meaningful change.
- Reengaging the Congolese people with civic education: A well-designed civic education curriculum will improve general knowledge of rights and obligations. The Congolese diaspora has many examples and case studies that can be shared with Congolese in the DRC.
- Empowering itself: A database of Congolese professionals living abroad, coordinated within the diaspora, could effectively mobilize Congolese experts for consulting purposes. This would facilitate greater diaspora involvement in reform-related efforts.
- Engaging in the reconstruction of the DRC: In addition to ongoing investment through remittances, the Congolese diaspora could also invest in microcredit projects, school building, and the like. Legislatively addressing the lack of an effective investment code, custom abuses, biased mining laws, and dual citizenship and voting rights would improve diaspora involvement.
- Denouncing corruption and impunity: The Congolese diaspora is well poised to bring about changes to the DRC by denouncing corruption, impunity, and other types of abuses.

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Such abuses, both public and private, should be exposed in the newspapers and possibly investigated. Furthermore, the diaspora should advocate anticorruption laws by lobbying the government and the parliament of the DRC and promoting the prosecution of corrupt individuals.

- Mitigating challenges and risks: Members of the Congolese diaspora will face many obstacles as they become involved in DRC issues. These obstacles include, but are not limited to, the DRC government's marginalization of the diaspora; the government's failure to commit resources for appropriate investments; the rivalry between the Congolese diaspora and the government; and the risk of jail time and death threats for expressing opposing viewpoints. These obstacles can be mitigated through international advocacy and awareness, on the one hand, and ongoing dialogue between the two parties, on the other, to build mutual trust.

## Conclusion

The recommendations in this report will amount to nothing if no action is taken. It will take concerted commitment from Congolese inside and outside the DRC to implement them. The DRC needs a visionary, competent, and virtuous cadre of individuals who can lift up the rest of the Congolese population through sound economic development policies and practices, adequate social services, and strong state institutions, leading to the establishment of a peaceful, just, secure, lawful, and orderly society.

## Notes

1. The first meeting (October 2009) focused on new strategies to address corruption, delink mining from the war economy, and encourage private-sector growth. The second meeting (March 2010) encouraged dialogue between the diaspora community and senior officials from the U.S. departments of State, Defense, Treasury and Health and Human Services, as well as the World Bank, International Finance Corporation, and the United Nations Development Programme. In the third meeting (May 14, 2010), a cross-section of leaders in various diaspora communities shared their views on prospects for political, social, and economic progress in the DRC and proposed concrete solutions for addressing some of the problems the DRC faces. This report captures the meetings' findings and recommendations, as well as the views of selected leaders of the DRC diaspora community. Presenters at this meeting provided written contributions to this report.
2. The editor would like to acknowledge Ir. Agnes Dimandja, Mr. Jacques Mushagasha, Mr. Victor Illunga, Drs. Georges Alula, Stephen Tubene, and Miatudila Malongi for their contributions to the report.
3. "Je ne dois rien au peuple congolais, mais le peuple congolais me doit tout." Mobutu has been quoted as saying—I owe the Congolese people nothing, but the Congolese people owe me everything.
4. The most concise discussion of the definition and nature of diaspora communities is provided by W. Safran, "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return," *Diaspora* 1, no. 1 (1991), 83–99.
5. See L. Riddle, J. Brinkerhoff, and T. Nielsen, "Partnering to Beckon Them Home: Public Sector Innovation for Diaspora Foreign Investment Promotion," *Public Administration and Development* 28 (2008), 54–66.
6. See M. Koinova, "Conditions and Timing of Moderate and Radical Diaspora Mobilization: Evidence from Conflict-Generated Diasporas, Global Migration, and Transnational Politics," Working Paper no. 9, Center for Global Studies, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA, 2009.
7. T. Nielsen and L. Riddle, "Investing in Peace: The Motivational Dynamics of Diaspora Investment in Post-Conflict Economies," *Journal of Business Ethics* 89, no. 4 (2009), 435–448.
8. Several leaders, such as Joseph Kasa-Vubu and Patrice Lumumba, attempted to carry the nation forward after independence. But Kasa-Vubu, as mentioned above, was ousted, and Lumumba, tragically, was assassinated.
9. See Vital Kamerhe at a conference at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC, February 2, 2011.
10. See DigitalCongo, August 16, 2011, <http://www.digitalcongo.net/>
11. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), "What is Good Governance?" 2010, <http://www.unescap.org/pdd/prs/projectactivities/ongoing/gg/governance.asp>.
12. It is often reputed that the DRC's soil contains every mineral in the periodic table. See, e.g., "International Spotlight: Democratic Republic of Congo," *Washington Post*, November 28, 2001, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-adv/specialsales/spotlight/congo/diamond.html>.
13. United Nations Security Council, panel of experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, October 16, 2002, [www.undemocracy.com/S=2002=1146/](http://www.undemocracy.com/S=2002=1146/)
14. World Bank, "DRC: World Bank Approves U.S. \$150 Million for Education," Press Release no. 2007/431/AFR, June 5, 2007.



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