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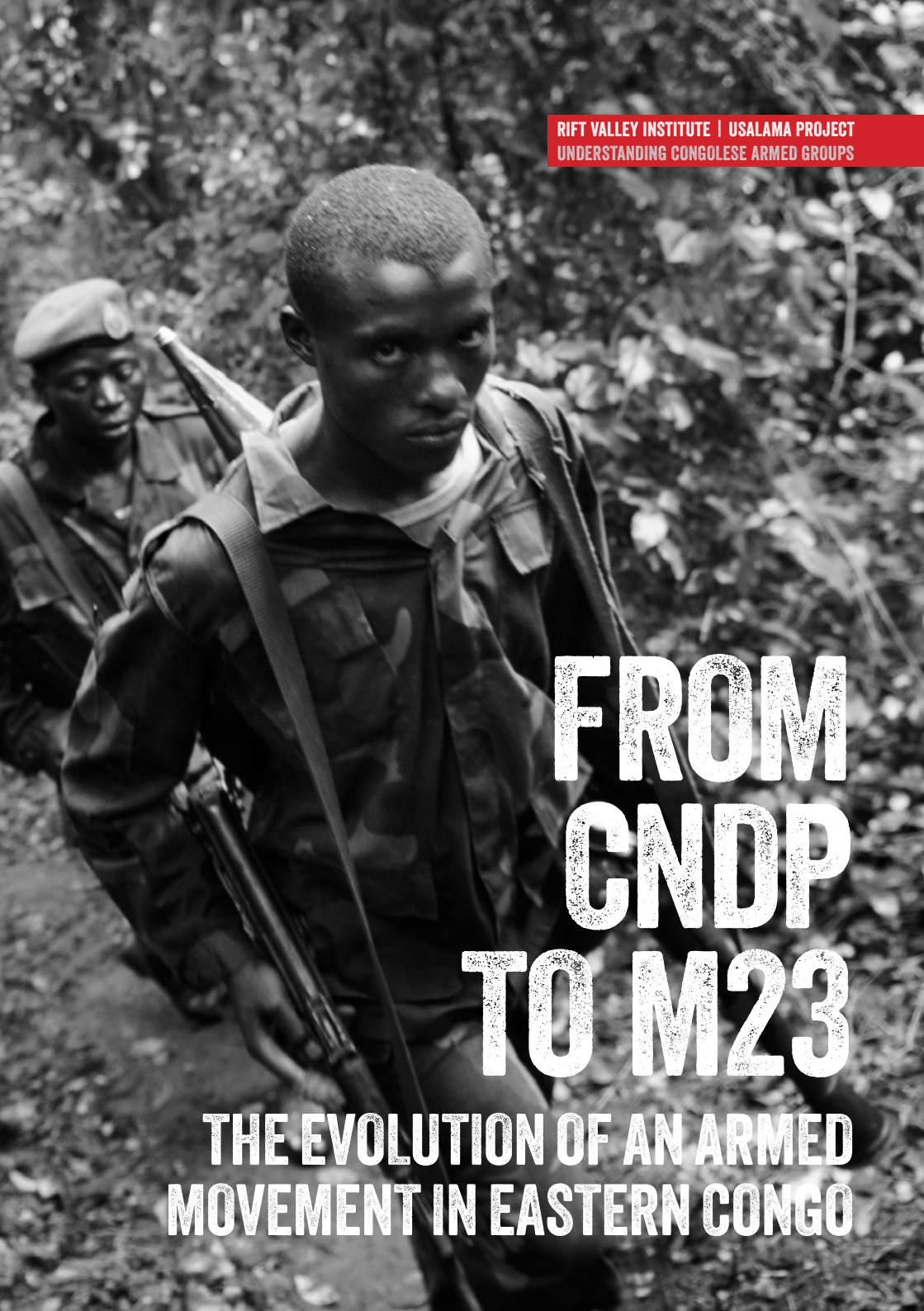
UNDERSTANDING CONGOLESE ARMED GROUPS



FROM CNDP TO M23

THE EVOLUTION OF AN ARMED MOVEMENT IN EASTERN CONGO

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From CNDP to M23
The evolution of an armed movement in eastern Congo

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THE USALAMA PROJECT

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COVER: M23 soldiers on patrol near Mabenga, North Kivu (2012).
Photograph by Phil Moore.

Map 1. *The eastern DRC, showing areas covered by the Usalama Project*

Map 2. *North Kivu, showing areas controlled or influenced by CNDP and M23*

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Preface: The Usalama Project

The Rift Valley Institute's Usalama Project ('peace' or 'security' in Swahili) is a response to on-going violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The protracted suffering of the inhabitants of this region in the past two decades has resulted in the expenditure of billions of dollars on conflict resolution. Yet the Congolese armed groups at the heart of the conflict are still poorly understood by the international organisations that operate in the DRC—and even by the Congolese government itself. The Usalama Project examines the roots of violence, with the aim of providing a better understanding of all armed groups, including the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC, *Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo*).

The Usalama research project is guided by a series of questions. What is the history of these armed groups? Who supports and controls them? What are the relations of particular groups to the state, to neighbouring states, to business interests and to the Congolese armed forces? Why have some groups been so difficult to demobilize, while others have disappeared? Are there patterns to be discerned in the ways that groups proliferate, negotiate with the state, and then vanish again?

The project takes a primarily qualitative approach. It analyses historical sources–and the small amount of quantitative data available–and traces the origins of armed groups through interviews with politicians, businessmen, representatives of civil society and members of armed groups. The project involves extended fieldwork by both international and Congolese researchers. The outcomes include reports on specific armed groups and wider geographical areas of conflict, and a series of seminars and workshops in the DRC.

Many of the interviews for this report were conducted on condition of anonymity. Where confidentiality was requested, identifying information in the report is limited to a number with a location and a date, e.g. Usalama Project Interviewee #105, Goma, 28 August 2012. In the course of the research, accounts of significant and potentially disputed events were confirmed by multiple sources with first-hand knowledge of the events under discussion.

Summary

The emergence of the M23 rebellion in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in April 2012 has refocused international attention on a complex regional conflict. Despite the Congolese army's sporadically strong resistance, well-armed M23 soldiers have dealt it several humiliating defeats and are trying to assemble a broad coalition with other armed groups in this region. This crisis has the potential of destabilizing the eastern DRC, as well as the government in Kinshasa, and has set in motion social and political dynamics that will be hard to reverse.

The M23 is latest in a series of armed groups to emerge in the Kivus region in recent years and should be seen in this historical context. It stands at the nexus of local and regional forces, propelled by a powerful mixture of elite interests, state weakness, and local conflicts. Yet there is no political strategy, either in Kinshasa or among donors, to deal in a comprehensive way with the deep-rooted causes that help foster such rebellions. Diplomacy has centred on the role of neighbouring Rwanda, which has been accused by the UN Group of Experts and Human Rights Watch of supporting the M23 with arms, funds, and personnel.[1] In response, several governments have suspended aid to Kigali. While many within and outside the region feel that the Rwandan government deserves censure, the lack of an action plan to channel international pressure—combined with a steady deterioration of relations between Kigali and Kinshasa—means that criticism has failed to produce tangible results.

To chart a path forward, all parties need to engage in a political process to find a compromise, not only to deal with the M23 but also to address

1 'Addendum to the Group of Experts of the DRC's interim report' (UN document S/2012/348/Add.1), 27 June 2012; Human Rights Watch, 'DR Congo: M23 Rebels Committing War Crimes', 11 September 2012.

the root causes of the crisis in the Kivus. The Rwandan government, now widely believed to bear the primary responsibility for the new rebellion, will have to accept the dilution, if not total dismantling, of M23 networks in the eastern DRC. For its part, the government of DRC will have to rebuild badly damaged community relations, reach out to bring Congolese Tutsi refugees back home, and agree to help Rwanda defeat remaining pockets of the *Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda* (FDLR, Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda).

These are, however, stop-gap measures. They need to be linked to long-term shifts in attitudes and incentives. While the establishment of a reliable state apparatus in the DRC—army, judiciary, and accountable political executive—is still a long way off, it is only alternatives to the creation of violent armed militias that can assuage community fears, guarantee basic security and protect property. The Kinshasa government should be open to ideas that include substantive and lasting decentralization, legitimate cross-border economic projects, grassroots inter-community reconciliation, and legal safeguards for minorities.

This report, the first in a series of papers on the warring factions in the eastern DRC, aims to inform these solutions by illuminating the conflict's main actors and their interests. Understanding the M23 and its direct predecessor, the *Congrès national pour la défense du peuple* (CNDP, National Congress for the Defence of the People), will help explain why violence has persisted in the Kivus region since the 2002 peace deal united the country and brought a devastating war to an end.

The main force driving the rebellion is the belief, held in Kigali as well as among Tutsi businessmen and military commanders in North Kivu, that the dysfunctional Congolese government will not be able to protect their varied interests—their security, investments, and political power. In order to safeguard these assets, they have backed armed groups: the CNDP between 2004 and 2009 and, since April 2012, the M23.

Virulent ethnic divides have exacerbated this mistrust. The Tutsi community, out of which these armed groups have emerged, occupies a precarious position in North Kivu, between privilege and discrimination. Its leaders are some of the wealthiest landowners and entrepreneurs in

the region, but there is also no doubting the prevalence and vitriolic intensity of anti-Tutsi sentiment in the Congo.

A final source of insecurity is the Congolese state itself. Its inability to enforce the rule of law, coupled with insufficient military strength to suppress armed rivals, encourages a belief that the only way of ensuring a modicum of security—protecting both property and individual freedoms—is through armed force. The weakness of state institutions is perhaps the most intractable part of the current conundrum.

Long-term solutions to this cycle of violence include comprehensive institutional overhaul, land reform, and fundamental changes to regional relations, in particular between Rwanda and the Congo. Such solutions cannot be imposed from the outside; a high-level panel convened by the African Union and United Nations could propose new policies for governments, senior military officers, and community leaders in the region. This could start debate and feed into a new political process.

1. Introduction

The history of North Kivu's Congolese Tutsi community is the key to understanding the motivations and frustrations that led to the birth of the CNDP. While other ethnic groups also participated in the CNDP rebellion, around 80 per cent of its most senior commanders came from the Tutsi community and it received steady support from Tutsi political and business elites in the region.[2]

The CNDP was not the first movement of its kind. Before what became known as the First Congo War began in 1996, the tightly-knit Tutsi community was mobilizing resources and sending thousands of young men to fight in the 1990–4 Rwandan civil war. They were an important part of the movement that toppled President Mobutu of Zaire in 1997; they were at the forefront of the rebellion against his successor Laurent Kabila, and are today the driving force behind the M23 mutiny. These conflicts have positioned the Tutsi community precariously in Congolese society, alternately benefitting from access to state power and suffering virulent discrimination, being persecuted and participating in brutal rebellions.

While Tutsi have been present in the eastern Congo for centuries, occupying positions of customary power—as in the eastern part of Rutshuru, in particular in the *groupements* (administrative sectors) of Gisigari, Jomba, and Bwiza—it is only in recent decades that they have gained a national profile. It was the large-scale, predominantly forced immigration of Rwandans between 1928 and 1956 that brought perhaps as many as 300,000 Banyarwanda (those who come from Rwanda)—as Hutu and Tutsi are collectively labelled in North Kivu—to the highlands

2 A more comprehensive historical background can be found in the Rift Valley Project Usalama Project report *North Kivu: The background to conflict in North Kivu province of eastern Congo*.

of Masisi, Rutshuru, and Walikale, to work on settler ranches and in lucrative state-controlled or public/private joint venture mining operations. By the time of independence, Banyarwanda became the majority in Masisi.

Rwandan independence in 1962 brought another wave of immigration. This time it was a more affluent group predominantly of Tutsi, fleeing persecution as a social revolution brought a Hutu leadership to power in Kigali. This group made rapid inroads into local politics and business. Tutsi family names such as Gahiga, Makabuza, Bisengimana, Rwayitare, and Karuretwa began to appear prominently in the hotel business, cross-border trade, coffee and tea plantations, tourism, cattle ranching, and telecommunications.

These new arrivals formed an important part of Goma's elite, along with the big names from among the local Tutsi upper class. Many of the latter came from the prosperous border area of Jomba, prompting the collective nickname *Banyajomba*. Among them were Denis Ntare Semadwinga, a Mobutu loyalist who subsequently played an important part in the CNDP leadership, and Cyprien Rwakabuba Shinga, the first Congolese Tutsi elected to office around independence. These influxes stirred tensions in the rural highlands, especially in Masisi, where large-scale Banyarwanda land acquisition angered established communities, who bridled at incomers usurping their own ancestral lands.

Nor were Tutsi leaders slow to achieve political office. In the aftermath of Zaire's independence, Mobutu courted Tutsi elites as allies—and was lobbied by them in turn. In 1969, Barthélemy Bisengimana, a refugee from Rwanda's independence turmoil, was named presidential chief of staff, while other Tutsi leaders won cabinet posts, seats in parliament, and senior positions in the intelligence services and on the boards of state-run companies.

This prominence helped the community lobby for a change in the laws regulating citizenship. In 1972, under Bisengimana's prompting, Mobutu promulgated a law conferring citizenship *en masse* on Rwandans who had arrived before independence in 1960. A year later, the government began a nationalization program that expropriated many foreign-owned

businesses in the country, including large tracts of farmland in the eastern highlands. Much of this land ended up in the hands of Banyarwanda businessmen, aggravating communal friction.

Such tensions often found expression in ethnic prejudice. Almost every Tutsi has a story of how he or she was bullied at school, called names, or attacked. Vicious stereotypes about Tutsi proliferated. Long before the genocide in Rwanda, epithets such as 'long-nosed ones', *kafiri* (uncircumcised), and 'snakes' became commonplace. When thousands of Rwandan Tutsi fled pogroms in Rwanda during pre-independence violence in 1959, some found refuge in an unfinished Belgian colonial building in Goma's Katindo neighbourhood—today part of the *Université de Goma*. The refugees spent months in the building and for years afterwards, when schoolchildren wanted to mock someone for being a Tutsi, they sang a song: *Batutsi banayala mu étage ya Katindo* ("The Tutsi are crammed into the Katindo building"). The song, with which every Tutsi in Goma is familiar, stresses their immigrant status and mocks them for being poor and destitute.

By the early 1980s, the political tide began to turn against Congolese Tutsi, as other communities in the Kivus tried to exclude them from power. In 1981, their citizenship was called into question by a law that gave automatic citizenship only to those whose families could be proven to have arrived before 1885. This legislation cast in doubt the legal rights, including land tenure, of over half a million Banyarwanda in the Kivus. The 1989 elections were postponed in North Kivu after protests over the candidacies of Rwandan immigrants. Finally, the 1991 *Conférence nationale souveraine* (CNS, National Sovereign Conference), charged with mapping out a transition from one-party rule, not only barred many Hutu and Tutsi delegates from attending but also endorsed the 1981 Citizenship Law.

The early 1990s was a period of intense unrest, when political contention turned violent, starting in rural Masisi. At the same time, the civil war in Rwanda broke out, setting the region further on edge. Many of the Tutsi commanders in the Congo today cut their teeth on the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) rebellion, when Tutsi from across the region were recruited to overthrow Juvénal Habyarimana's regime in Rwanda.

Starting in 1989, local RPF committees were set up throughout Goma and rural areas, raising funds and recruiting youths. Hundreds of Congolese joined the RPF, and the networks of friends and comrades they made during the Rwandan civil war formed a basis for future rebellions. Many Congolese Tutsi also lost family members during this period to attacks by Hutu militia.

It was the fall of Habyarimana's government, the genocide of 800,000 people in Rwanda, and the influx of a million refugees into eastern Congo that triggered an all-out war. In October 1996, North Kivu was invaded by the *Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaire* (AFDL, Alliance of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire). This rebel group was backed—in fact created—by the Rwandan and Ugandan governments. The AFDL leader, Laurent-Desiré Kabila, was thus assisted all the way to Kinshasa and the presidency, and Zaire became the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

When the Rwandan government fell out with Kabila in 1998, it set about creating a new rebellion, but used a different strategy in North Kivu. This time, it courted prominent leaders among the Congolese Hutu community in an effort to dissociate them from exiled Rwandan Hutus, especially *génocidaires* (perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide) and soldiers loyal to the old Rwandan regime, who were still determined to fight their way back into power. This rebellion, the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la démocratie* (RCD, Congolese Rally for Democracy) embroiled the Kivus in a bitter counterinsurgency, as the RCD and Rwandan troops cracked down on the FDLR and Mai-Mai militia allied to Kinshasa.[3]

While the Hutu and Tutsi communities formed the backbone of the Rwandan-backed alliance, especially in North Kivu, there were also tensions between the Rwandan army and Congolese Tutsi officers that surfaced at this time. These quarrels centred on identity: the Rwandan

3 Mai-Mai groups (derived from the Swahili word *maji*, 'water') are defence militias, rooted in local communities and often reflecting local culture. Mai-Mai groups have played a significant role in successive conflicts in the eastern DRC and continue to do so.

government considered these Congolese Tutsi as part of its army, having trained and groomed them, while many officers said they had only fought in the Rwandan army in order to liberate the Congo. One ex-CNDP leader remembered a speech given by their Rwandan commander at this time:

> He told us: "We are all Rwandan. There is no such thing as a Congolese Tutsi." And he ordered us to go back to Rwanda. We refused and suffered because of it.[4]

Such tensions have their own history. A stark example was the Murekezi mutiny of May 1997, at the end of the First Congo War. After the overthrow of President Mobutu, Rwanda decided to withdraw its troops from the DRC, encouraging Congolese Tutsi from North as well as South Kivu to go with them. These calls prompted suspicion in the Congolese Tutsi community, which, while often reliant on Rwanda's protection, is also fiercely independent. A mutiny broke out, led by Lieutenant Murekezi, a Tutsi from Masisi, who opposed any departure to Rwanda. Crucially, many future CNDP and M23 officers were among those who either participated in or sympathized with this mutiny, including Christian Pay-Pay, Faustin Muhindo, Baudouin Ngaruye, Claude Micho, and Wilson Nsengiyumva.

The standoff ended when, at a military assembly in Goma in early November 1997, the Rwandan commander in charge shot Murekezi in the head, killing him, and signalled to the Rwandan soldiers to begin shooting and rounding up the other mutineers. Several others were killed or injured, and the survivors were tied up and thrown on a truck. They were taken to Rwanda, where many of them were imprisoned on Iwawa Island before being redeployed, demoted and demoralized, back to the DRC.

This mutiny revealed the tensions between the Congolese Tutsi officers and the Rwandan army. 'It's complicated,' one of the mutineers said. 'We have our problems with them, but at the end of the day we are all Tutsi, and the Congolese hate us. What can we do?'[5]

4 Usalama Project Interviewee #108, Goma, 29 August 2012.

5 Usalama Project Interviewee #108, Goma, 29 August 2012.

The RCD rebellion ended in 2003, when a peace deal signed in South Africa brought about a transitional government, uniting the country and integrating all main belligerents into one army.

Failure of the peace process

The emergence of the CNDP was closely connected to flaws in the transition process that began, tentatively, to reunite the country in 2003. It soon became clear that some of the signatories to the peace deal, which committed all belligerents to joining the transitional government and merging their militia forces into the national army, had been hedging their bets. The RCD in particular, which controlled much of the eastern DRC, saw two threats inherent in the process.

First, the RCD was afraid that, at best, it would be an unequal partner in the power-sharing transitional government and, at worst, it would be subsumed by Joseph Kabila, who took over as head of the Congolese state after his father was assassinated in January 2001. The location was important: the transition unfolded in Kinshasa, unfamiliar and sometimes hostile turf, 2,000 km away from the RCD's headquarters in Goma. Early in the transition, there were already signs that Kabila, whom the peace deal confirmed in the presidency, was trying to outmanoeuvre the other parties to the agreement. According to the peace deal, Kabila's party was supposed to hold one of four vice presidential posts—but by co-opting the representative of the opposition, he was able to tilt the balance of power in his favour. Most infuriating for the RCD, real power in Kinshasa—beyond the trappings of rank and authority—lay less in the official institutions of state than in the persona of the president and his informal networks.[6]

The second threat to the RCD was even more fundamental to its continued existence. The climax of transition was to be national elections—and with the RCD seen by many outside the Banyarwanda

6 International Crisis Group (ICG), 'The Congo's Transition is Failing: Crisis in the Kivus,' Africa Report No 91, 30 March 2005, pp. 15–19.

MAJOR INCIDENTS OF ANTI-TUTSI VIOLENCE

With the arrival of a million Rwandan refugees in the eastern Congo by July 1994, many rural areas became uninhabitable for Tutsi. Tens of thousands fled to Goma and Rwanda, losing property and livestock, and hundreds were killed.

On 12 May 1996, Hutu militia attacked the Mokoto monastery in Masisi territory, where many hundred Tutsi had sought refuge. Up to a hundred Tutsi and Hunde civilians were killed. Around the same time, similar militia massacred dozens of Tutsi civilians around Bunagana and Jomba in Rutshuru territory, 18 on the Osso farm in Masisi, and a dozen in Bukombo in Rutshuru.

In August 1998, after the RCD war had been launched, troops loyal to President Laurent Désiré Kabila rounded up Tutsi civilians and soldiers in cities around the country and summarily executed them. This included around a hundred men at the Kamina military camp in Katanga province, 80 in the Kananga camp in Kasai-Occidental, 133 Tutsi civilians around the town of Kalima in Maniema, dozens in Kisangani in Province Orientale, 70 in cities in southern Katanga, 70 in Kalemie and 40 in Moba (both in Katanga), and around a hundred soldiers in military camps in Kinshasa itself.

On 14 September 1998, Hutu Mai-Mai militia attacked Goma, with support from the ex-FAR. They killed 12 Tutsi who had fled there from Kisangani in an orphanage in the Ndosho neighbourhood. As many as a hundred more Tutsi were also killed in the town that day.

community as Rwandan stooges, the party ran the risk of decimation at the ballot box. Indeed, when the polls were eventually held in July 2006, the RCD secured just 1.5 per cent of the vote in the presidential vote—and the number of seats they held in the national assembly was slashed from 94 to 15.

Clearly, immense tension was created by the fact that the RCD, at one point one of the strongest military forces in the entire country, had the least to gain from the political transition. In equal measure, the stakes were high for the new political and business class in Goma. After seven years of rule by Rwandan allies—first in the AFDL, then in the RCD—this elite was under threat.

Ethnic antagonisms only accentuated the problem. The RCD did not just provide protection for businesses and jobs in the administration: it also guaranteed the physical safety of the Banyarwanda, the Tutsi in particular. It is difficult to underestimate how deeply Tutsi feared persecution. Almost all Tutsi in North Kivu fled the countryside in 1994, gathering in city centres or moving to Rwanda. Thousands were killed. When the RCD rebellion was launched in 1998, hundreds of Tutsi, including many soldiers, were rounded up in army camps and towns around the country and massacred. So the transition threatened not just their power base but, at least in the perception of many, their very survival. The transition never directly addressed these fears—nor the hatred among other communities that stemmed from abuses perpetrated by Tutsi-led soldiers.

Nkunda's defection and the war for Bukavu

In this climate, those who were to instigate the eastern DRC's latest rebellion were loath to give the transition a real chance. In September 2003, General Laurent Nkunda and two fellow senior officers refused to join the newly integrated national army, citing both personal and community-wide security concerns and a general mistrust of Kinshasa. Nkunda was a Congolese Tutsi who had been the RCD's Kisangani brigade commander when more than 160 people were massacred there in May 2002. During the transition he was nominated as RCD commander

of North Kivu—but he feared that he would be arrested when he went to Kinshasa to be sworn in.

While Nkunda is known for his independent spirit, many of his fellow officers now say that the Rwandan government influenced this decision, as well as what was to come. 'Rwanda told Nkunda and others to refuse,' according to a senior former CNDP commander. 'The order came from Kigali; they needed a plan B in case the transition didn't work out.'[7] Another remembered: 'The Rwandans told us: "If you go to Kinshasa, you will come back in coffins."'[8] Four other senior ex-CNDP officers close to Nkunda agree that Rwanda played a key role in his decision to defect—although some insist that Nkunda was his own man and charted his own path within parameters provided by Rwanda.[9]

There were other symptoms of Rwanda loading the dice against the transition. Some point to Nkunda's rapid rise through the ranks—from company-level intelligence officer to Brigadier General in just seven years—as an earlier indication that Rwanda was grooming him as a proxy.

Even before unification, Nkunda began making preparations. He set up an organization called *Synergie nationale pour la paix et la concorde* (Synergie, National Synergy for Peace and Concord) to rally like-minded leaders.[10] 'He would tell us how Kinshasa didn't care about us, how thousands of our families were suffering in refugee camps in Rwanda, how the FDLR was still a threat,' one of Synergie's members recalled.[11] The group was small and composed mostly of civilians from the Banyarwanda, Nande and Shi communities. They started holding meetings in early 2003, but formalized their structure in December of that year in Bukavu, before opening an office in Goma.

7 Usalama Project Interviewee #101, former high-ranking CNDP officer, Goma, 30 August 2012.

8 Usalama Project Interviewee #104, former CNDP leader, Kinshasa, 15 March 2012.

9 Usalama Project Interviewees #102, #103, #104, and #105, Goma, July–September 2012.

10 See Appendix 1: Leadership of *Synergie nationale pour la paix et la concorde*.

11 Usalama Project Interviewee #102, Goma, 27 August 2012.

Nkunda's dissident view was far from unique; nor was it restricted to the eastern provinces. By early 2004, tensions within the transitional government had come to a head, army integration was stagnating, the RCD felt Kabila was monopolizing power and little progress was being made towards elections or a real unification of the country. For its part, the Kinshasa government was guilty of inertia. It did not take the dissidents seriously until it was too late. In early 2004, RCD president Azarias Ruberwa met Nkunda and his fellow defectors, persuading them to write to Kabila for forgiveness. They complied, but Kabila never answered the letter.[12] One of Nkunda's top commanders recalled, 'I didn't trust Rwanda, but Kinshasa had abandoned me—I had spent five months in a training camp in Kinshasa with no salary, my family was going hungry. When Nkunda began recruiting, I saw I didn't have an option.'[13]

Nkunda knew that creating a purely political organization would not be enough. Following his defection, he began contacting Banyarwanda army officers and laying the groundwork for a larger rebellion.

When Rwandan troops withdrew from the eastern DRC in mid-2002 under the terms of the transitional deal, the RCD had called many of its Banyarwanda commanders back to North Kivu to strengthen their rear base in the run-up to army integration and to provide a buffer for Rwanda against FDLR incursions. These men came to constitute the 81st, 82nd, and 83rd Brigades, controlling most of Masisi and Walikale, and eventually becoming the backbone of Nkunda's army. (The names of these brigades changed to 81st, 82nd and 83rd in 2005. Until then they retained their RCD titles: the 5th, 11th, and 12th Brigades.[14]

12 Usalama Project interview with Azarias Ruberwa, Kinshasa, 11 July 2012.

13 Usalama Project Interviewee #108, Goma, 29 August 2012.

14 The 5th, 11th and 12th Brigades were deployed in Rutshuru (12th) and Masisi (5th and 11th). The 11th Brigade became the 81st, the 12th became the 82nd around November 2005.

It was in Bukavu that the tensions reached boiling point. The transitional agreement imposed a former Kabila loyalist as military commander in South Kivu, with an ex-RCD colonel as his deputy. It hardly helped that both the RCD governor and the military commander in Bukavu had been sentenced in absentia for the assassination of the president's father, Laurent-Désiré Kabila, in January 2001. The crisis came in February 2004 when the RCD's Major Joseph Kasongo, who had also been sentenced to death in the same trial, was arrested by Kabila loyalist General Prosper Nabyolwa. The senior RCD commander in Bukavu, Colonel Jules Mutebutsi, responded by attacking Nabyolwa, who was then replaced with another commander, General Mbuza Mabe. A shaky ceasefire held until May 2004, when fighting erupted in earnest.

As the dissidents were led by Tutsi commanders, the fighting took an ethnic turn: army officers rounded up around 15 Tutsi, including minors, and killed them. This prompted allegations of genocide by both the Rwandan government and Nkunda, who began to mobilize the networks he had built and maintained among RCD loyalists in North Kivu. Then, with some support from Rwanda, including the transport of weapons and ammunition across Lake Kivu, Nkunda marched on Bukavu.

The fight for Bukavu lasted just ten days—but it pushed the transition to the brink of collapse. The RCD's malcontents, thus far limited to political organizing, began to assemble a military force to resist what they saw as Kinshasa's malign intent. Even though Nkunda was forced by international pressure to retreat from Bukavu, diplomacy had already been superseded by outright conflict. Ruberwa formally suspended the RCD's participation in transition—and Kinshasa sent thousands of reinforcements to the east to force an integration that negotiations had failed to achieve.[15]

15 Ruberwa's decision followed the massacre of 160 Banyamulenge refugees at the Gatumba refugee camp in Burundi. He suggested that the Congolese government had been involved, although Burundian rebels claimed responsibility.

RCD splits and early battles

The RCD, always a fractious group, began to break up under the strains of the transition. Different parts of the party began peeling off and allying with Kinshasa, reducing the dissidents to a radical core. Some Hutu, whose heart had never been in the RCD due to the antipathy toward Rwanda, dissented. The Hutu-Tutsi alliance had been the backbone of the RCD in North Kivu and vital in its counterinsurgency strategy against the FDLR.

Soon after the return of Nkunda from the failed integration fissures appeared in this alliance. In December 2004, a group of Hutu military officers and local leaders wrote letters denouncing the manipulation of Banyarwanda identity and expressing allegiance to the central government.[16] This disagreement exposed a larger, historical rift: many of the signatories—including Xavier Nzabara, the Mayor of Goma, and Colonel Janvier Mayanga, commander of the 5th brigade—had been at odds with Kigali in the past and had fought against Rwandan troops between 1996 and 1998.

Soon afterward, Eugène Serufuli, Governor of North Kivu, began to court Kabila. 'He felt that his authority was being challenged by Nkunda, that he was no longer in control,' according to one of the governor's close collaborators.[17] Serufuli himself was more explicit: 'I had felt since Sun City [where the 2002 Global and Inclusive Agreement on Transition was signed] that the RCD didn't have a future. That's why I took my decision to get closer to Kinshasa.'[18]

This split alarmed both Nkunda and his Rwandan backers. In mid-2005, General James Kabarebe, chief of the Rwandan defence staff, called several high-ranking ex-RCD officers and told them Nkunda was going to return to the DRC and that they should ensure that he was

16 MONUC North Kivu daily report, 16 December 2004.

17 Usalama Project Interviewee #20, Goma, 12 May 2012.

18 Usalama Project interview with Eugène Serufuli, Goma, July 2012.

protected.[19] Nkunda crossed the border and made his way to Kitchanga, the headquarters of the 83rd Brigade. 'He was very busy at this time,' said one of the senior officers who was with him. 'We received visits from politicians, businessmen—there were even several Rwandan military officers who came to visit him then.'[20]

On 8 September 2005, in his first official appearance for over a year, Nkunda issued an aggressive statement that effectively launched a new rebellion. The 'Kabila clan', he said, was responsible for sowing ethnic division in the Kivus and muzzling political opposition, and bore responsibility for multiple human rights abuses. The letter accused Kinshasa of organizing a 'plan for ethnic cleansing in North Kivu under the cover of military integration' and pressed for the use of 'all necessary means to force this government to step down'.[21]

The timing suited Nkunda well, not least because the army was still in the middle of *brassage*, the process of integrating the various former warring factions into their ranks. The letter forced the hands of ex-RCD commanders who were still uncommitted: once integrated, they were likely to be deployed outside the Kivus in units dominated by strangers. Soon after Nkunda arrived in Kitchanga, he started calling on ex-RCD commanders to defect.

'He held his first meeting in Nyamitaba,' one of his former officers recalled. 'He talked about his project: to overthrow the tribalist power of Kabila, to bring back the Tutsi refugees from Rwanda and to beat back the FDLR.'[22] By the end of the year, around half of the 82nd Brigade, some 1,000 soldiers, had defected, while many of the 81st and 83rd Brigades refused to go to *brassage* and rallied around Nkunda. Alarmed by these developments and by Nkunda's belligerent statements, the govern-

19 Usalama Project Interviewees #108, #109, and #101, Goma, August 2012.

20 Usalama Project Interviewee #101, Goma, 30 August 2012.

21 Amnesty International, 'Democratic Republic of Congo: North-Kivu: Civilians pay the price for political and military rivalry', September 2005, p. 11.

22 Usalama Project Interviewee #109, Goma, August 2012.

ment in Kinshasa issued an arrest warrant for the dissident general on 7 September 2005.[23]

The first major fighting involving units who had defected erupted in late 2005, when the first integrated brigade was deployed in Rutshuru territory—an area that had been occupied by RCD troops for the previous seven years. Its new brigade commander, Lieutenant Colonel Shé Kasikila, made no secret of his antipathy toward the RCD establishment in Goma. He immediately began cordon-and-search operations to retrieve weapons distributed to civilians by ex-RCD officials. According to intelligence officers present, he disparaged Tutsi and Rwandan involvement in the DRC and helped to expose a number of mass graves that, according to locals, held the victims of massacres carried out by the Rwandan army and its Congolese allies in 1996–7.[24]

Some defectors who subsequently joined the CNDP accused Kasikila of systematically abusing Banyarwanda, but the scale of these alleged abuses was probably exaggerated and the charge may have been simply a pretext to stir up dissent. Troops loyal to Nkunda tried to assassinate Kasikila twice before launching an attack on the district around Rutshuru that drove the general out.

If Nkunda had intended to restore Hutu-Tutsi solidarity, he failed. Governor Serufuli swiftly issued a communiqué condemning Nkunda's actions. Shortly afterward, Colonel David Rugayi, the Hutu commander of the 83rd Brigade, defected with over 1,400 soldiers and joined the national army. Colonel Smith Gihanga, the 81st Brigade commander, followed him several months later. Nkunda lost his two most important Hutu officers—and the Hutu-Tutsi alliance that had underpinned RCD success in North Kivu was broken.

23 MONUC North Kivu Daily Report, 9 September 2012.

24 This unveiling of mass graves was one of the incidents that led the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to launch the mapping of gross human rights violations in the Congo between 1993 and 2003.

2. Creation of the CNDP

What was supposed to have been a smooth transition was threatening to unravel in North Kivu. National elections were due to take place in July 2006 but security had been undermined by Nkunda's rejection of the military integration process, by the worsening divisions between Hutu and Tutsi, and by the proliferation of armed groups. With a force now numbering several thousand, Nkunda controlled much of the Masisi highlands. Kinshasa, however, still hoped to appease the rebels—especially as it had won over important Hutu leaders in Goma and persuaded over 1,400 of Nkunda's Hutu troops to defect.

According to several high-ranking CNDP officers, however, Nkunda had no intention of striking any quick deals. One key sign of his commitment included an ambitious effort to create a more sophisticated movement, wooing his elaborate network of supporters, developing a public relations apparatus for his political wing and providing training camps for his troops, which he called the *Conseil militaire pour la défense du peuple* (CMDP, Military Council for the Defence of the People)—or also, more polemically, the Anti-Genocide Brigade.

At Bwiza camp, in late 2005, senior officers received training in military strategy and ideology. Among them were all the battalion commanders who had defected from the *brassage* process. 'There were different modules,' one of the instructors remembered, 'one called Senior Officer Leadership Course or SOLEC, that was the first one, then Officer Management Course—I remember the Rwandans had given us a book on management, they said we needed it!'[25] From the first batch of Bwiza graduates, Nkunda formed a new high command, capable of making serious military decisions. For day-to-day management, he set up an *état major* (general staff office) and began to reorganize his men into a brigade and battalion structure.

25 Usalama Project Interviewee #104, Kinshasa, 15 March 2012.

Ntaganda joins Nkunda

In early 2006, Nkunda acquired an important new follower—a figure whose role would only increase in magnitude over the following six years. General Bosco Ntaganda was the former chief of staff of a militia based in Ituri Province, the *Union des Patriotes Congolais* (UPC, Union of the Congolese Patriots). He fled Ituri under severe pressure from the United Nations peacekeepers, the DRC and Ugandan governments and drove to Bwiza from the Rwandan border—arriving, according to one account, dressed in a tracksuit and clutching a red appointment book. Within a few months, he would be promoted to chief of staff of the CNDP.

During this crucial phase, Nkunda merged his political operation, *Synergie*, with his military identity, the CMDP. The result was the CNDP—formally born on 26 July 2006, with Nkunda as both Chairman and Supreme Commander.[26] The clear stress was on the demands and insecurities of the Tutsi community. A fundamental concern underpinning the CNDP's existence—and whose resolution was a precondition for any future army integration—was the eradication of the FDLR rebels, ideally to be coupled with the return of the 55,000 Congolese Tutsi still living in refugee camps in Rwanda.

Internal structural reform worked well: the CNDP functioned with far greater sophistication than any other armed group in the DRC. For a time, it boasted not only a radio station and a communications team that issued regular press statements to an eager international media, but two websites (www.cndp-congo.org and www.kivupeace.org, both now defunct). The CNDP set up a network of *syndicats*: grassroots structures in charge of mobilizing funds, recruits and disseminating CNDP ideology—with chapters not only in rural Masisi but also in Canada, South Africa, and Belgium.

In setting up these structures, Nkunda was inspired in particular by the experience of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), in which he had

26 See Appendix 2: CNDP/M23 facts and figures.

EXTRACT FROM LAURENT NKUNDA'S SPEECH AT NYAMITABA, 6 AUGUST 2006

"Why have we come to Nyamitaba?

In 1964, in North Kivu, some people decided to kill all those who spoke Kinyarwanda. I speak to you now, but back then my parents were at Mirangi and Kivuku, taken to prison and ready to be killed. Then here in Nyamitaba there was a meeting where I met my parents, my brothers and my sisters. This meeting made us decide we would fight, that we would no longer go into exile. This meeting made the Rwandans realize that they have the right to live in this country…

For this reason, I respect you and I honour you. If you had not held this meeting back then, I would not be here and those sat behind me would also not be here…

I want to tell you, those who tried to kill us back then have come back. Those in power are bad. They come to tell people to kill your children; that some should live and that others should not live. We must all be vigilant…

Second, I represent the army. We fought with spears, sticks, and modern weapons, but that didn't stop us from being killed. Rwandans are a people like any other. Our army is dedicated to pacifying the region, and to bring back the other tribes who are not here, Hunde, Bashi, and people from Equateur province…

Thirdly, I want us during this meeting to remove the curse that blights our country. It stems from the fact that people have spilled the blood of others. This is a biblical curse, from the time of Cain and Abel. The good Lord asked Cain, 'Who will pay for the blood of your brother?' Blood is being spilled in this country. Some people are spilling the blood of their brothers without knowing. At this meeting in Nyamitaba, we want people to see, so that they will not spill the blood of their brothers without knowing… In this meeting, we want to agree that never again will we spill the blood of our brothers.

Nobody has become rich because of their tribe; people become rich because of themselves, because of their way of being."

initially been trained a decade earlier. The *syndicats* mirrored the RPF's own expansive network, mobilizing funds and recruits among the Tutsi diaspora, including the eastern DRC. Another common feature inherited by the CNDP from the RPF was the emphasis on morale-boosting ideology. The RPF's own philosophical godfather, Uganda's National Revolutionary Movement (NRM), had likewise stressed ideological conditioning. In Nkunda's own words: 'A soldier who knows why he fights is more effective than a hundred who know nothing.'[27]

This mind-set extended to local outreach. Starting in Nyamitaba in 2006, Nkunda began holding *ubusabane* (harmony) rallies for local peasants—another idea borrowed from Rwanda—at which CNDP leaders would give speeches, followed by dancing and singing. Attempts to spread ideology even targeted schools, where children learned songs praising individual CNDP commanders.[28] The CNDP was as preoccupied with controlling and taxing the population as it was with promoting revolutionary spirit. It set up a police force, installed its own administrators, and began exacting taxes for everything from small kiosks to mining and the charcoal trade. In return, it provided security, paid some school fees and health bills incurred by poverty-stricken families, and organized communal labour on the roads. But it was also known to reprimand brutally those who would not accept CNDP regulations and those thought to be collaborating with their enemies.

The Sake crisis and *mixage*

The national elections held in 2006 did little to temper Nkunda's ambitions. Kabila's coalition, the *Alliance pour la majorité présidentielle* (AMP, Alliance for a Presidential Majority) swept both presidential and legislative elections in the Kivus, winning over 80 per cent of the vote in areas controlled by Nkunda. It appeared that the country was moving

27 Andrew Stewart Scott, *Laurent Nkunda et la rébellion du Kivu* (Paris: Karthala, 2009), p. 172.

28 Usalama Project interview with MONUC child protection officer, Goma, June 2006.

on without him: despite his predictions of disaster, the transition phase was complete and the DRC was at least stumbling along. The polls also underscored the challenges for a minority in this new democracy. No Tutsis at all were elected to the North Kivu provincial assembly and only one to the National Assembly: Dunia Bakarani, who, while from Masisi, was not an RCD candidate.

It was an attack against a Tutsi that triggered what amounted to the first CNDP war. On 24 November 2006, police at a checkpoint in Sake, on the northern tip of Lake Kivu, got into an argument with a Tutsi businessman bringing fuel into CNDP territory. The businessman, Musafiri Mayogi, son of a prominent Goma family, was shot dead. The police insisted that they had merely responded when he pulled out a pistol and shot at an officer; the CNDP claimed that the police had instigated a deliberate killing.

Within hours of the incident, the CNDP launched an all-out offensive on Sake, then quickly advanced towards Goma. According to one CNDP official, 'it was an emotional decision'.[29] The speed of their assault led many observers to believe that they had been preparing for some time, just waiting for the right opportunity.[30] At the same time, a CNDP battalion opened up an access route to Rwanda via Runyoni, and unsuccessfully besieged Bunagana. There was also heavy fighting around Kikuku and Tongo. With the Congolese army crumbling, its chain of command in confusion, MONUC peacekeepers were forced to defend Goma, warning Nkunda to halt his advance. In the bloodiest day of fighting in the CNDP's history, at least 150 of its soldiers were gunned down in the open terrain between Sake and Goma by UN armoured vehicles and helicopters—their deaths recorded on video.[31]

This defeat forced both sides to the negotiation table and, in a development that was to be repeated in every subsequent round of negotiations,

29 Usalama Project Interviewee #103, Bukavu, 12 September 2012.

30 Usalama Project electronic communication with UN employee, 19 October 2012.

31 MONUC North Kivu Weekly Report, 26 November–1 December 2012.

Rwanda played a crucial role as mediator. Nkunda was flown by helicopter to Kigali alongside Kinshasa's chief negotiator, General John Numbi. The resulting peace deal would provide a blueprint for subsequent agreements: it required the integration of CNDP units into the Congolese army—but this time without redeployment outside of the Kivus. Indeed, the first priority for these newly integrated units would be an offensive against the FDLR. This deal was dubbed *mixage*, another form of *brassage* (the earlier integration process) and created six 'mixed' brigades, deployed in Masisi and Rutshuru.

Nkunda always had a tactical edge over his government counterparts. He had much better control over his troops and he was able to take advantage of *mixage*, ensuring that his own units remained intact at battalion level and that his general staff was not affected. Critically, he gained from an infusion of cash and equipment. The CNDP received around USD 190,000 a month in salaries, based on artificially inflated troop numbers: they claimed to have 7,221 soldiers, probably around 40 per cent higher than the true figure. CNDP fighters also received a modest amount of ammunition for operations against the FDLR. 'The government was our logistician,' was the way Nkunda recalled this phase.[32] One of his senior officers was more direct: '*Mixage* – that's how we built the CNDP.'[33]

Given this cynical approach, it is hardly surprising that *mixage* as a process broke down in a matter of months. It was the campaign against the FDLR that triggered its collapse—and the second CNDP war. Many of the newly joint operations took place in areas where the FDLR had been living side-by-side with the Congolese Hutu population for years. Counterinsurgency led to many abuses, often perpetrated by CNDP officers. In Buramba, for example, CNDP Colonel Sultani Makenga's Bravo Brigade held a public meeting, threatening to kill anyone who collaborated with the FDLR. The following day, Makenga's vehicle was

32 Usalama Project interview with Laurent Nkunda, Tebero, April 2006.

33 Usalama Project Interviewee #101, Goma, 2 September 2012.

ambushed, prompting immediate reprisals against local civilians, in which at least 15 people were killed.[34] In another attack several days earlier, CNDP soldiers shot dead a parish priest in Jomba, close to the Ugandan border.

As *mixage* collapsed, fighting broke out as Nkunda's units separated from the army to defend strategic positions. Key flashpoints were around Runyoni and Bunagana, controlling access to Rwanda and Uganda, Tongo and Nyanzale, transit points from Rutshuru to Masisi, and along the Katale-Ngungu axis, which controls central Masisi. The demise of *mixage* was accelerated by the proliferation of militias in North Kivu. Exasperated by the army's weakness and seeking to bolster their own political stature, officers and politicians threw their weight behind various armed groups in early 2007. One of CNDP's main rival armed group *Patriotes résistants congolais* (PARECO, Alliance of Resistant Congolese Patriots) backers, General Mayanga wa Gishuba, put it this way: 'We couldn't trust the army. It was often complicit with the enemy, so we had to create our own militia.'[35] Not only did PARECO include CNDP defectors but many Hutu, based in their home villages, collaborated with the FDLR.

In December 2007, Kinshasa finally dispatched around 20,000 troops in an offensive against the CNDP, the government now fighting alongside the FDLR and various associated militia. The offensive culminated dismally in the army's rout by the CNDP at Mushaki on 10 December 2007.

34 Human Rights Watch, 'Renewed Crisis in North Kivu', October 2007, pp. 28–30.

35 Usalama Project interview with General Janvier Mayanga wa Gishuba, Kinshasa, 17 May 2012.

3. The Goma Conference

After such a devastating defeat, Kinshasa decided to try a different track. For several months, leading Congolese politicians—principally Denis Kalume, the minister of interior, and national assembly president Vital Kamerhe—had been proposing a full-scale peace conference, involving local communities and armed groups. The idea was both noble and novel: the transitional government had never tried to tackle the root causes of conflict in the Kivus, including issues of reconciliation, local power struggles, and the presence of the FDLR. A new peace process was needed, so its proponents argued, to address these challenges.

The Goma Conference of January 2008 was in many respects a positive and cathartic experience. Community leaders could at last speak out, expressing their anger and grief at decades of war, voicing emotions they had never had a chance to voice in front of their rivals. But the peace deal that emerged sidelined such figures, committing only the armed groups in attendance to a ceasefire, a general amnesty, refugee return, and army integration. Just as the previous negotiations that led to *mixage* had failed, so too was this deal foiled in its implementation phase. The body charged with the implementation—the *Amani* (Peace) Programme—suffered through several months of laborious talks before it became clear that the main armed groups had abandoned the process.

Most ominously—and a cautionary tale for future efforts of this kind—the conference perversely sparked the creation of many new armed groups, who mobilized in hope of benefitting from the peace dividend. The Congolese government helped in this proliferation, hoping to counterbalance the CNDP.

The post-conference ceasefire lasted just a couple of months. When large-scale fighting resumed on 28 August 2008, with the Congolese army launching an offensive at Ntamugenga in eastern Rutshuru, the CNDP moved swiftly. They seized the Rumangabo military camp on 26 October with the support of Rwandan military units and advanced

on Goma. The fighting was stopped by international pressure and talks between Congo and Rwanda, which culminated in the Ihusi Agreement of 16 January 2009.[36]

This period saw the peak of Rwandan involvement. 'The Rwandans were not that important until 2008,' one officer said, echoing the sentiments of many others. 'That's when their influence became serious and we became less independent.'[37] Rwandan troops also participated directly in the shelling of Congolese army positions—even as the CNDP pushed on toward Goma, reaching the edge of town on 28 October and sending its army garrison fleeing into the countryside.

With little to show for four years of fighting with dissident elements in the east—and at least six failed offensives—the Kinshasa government decided to pursue yet another strategy. In October 2008, officials began travelling to Kigali, this time hoping for an agreement that would cut Nkunda out of the process entirely and ensure a full and successful integration of CNDP soldiers into the national army.

Surprisingly, especially given Rwanda's overt support in the CNDP drive on Goma, Kigali was also increasingly saw Nkunda as an obstacle. In December 2008, the United Nations Group of Experts on the DRC provided evidence of a proxy war in the Kivus—Kinshasa was supporting Mai-Mai groups and the FDLR, while Kigali backed the CNDP. This intensified pressure, especially on Kigali.

The Goma Conference had also turned Nkunda into a celebrity. The high-profile negotiations and the subsequent escalation in fighting put him in the media spotlight. TV crews from around the world vied to get the media-savvy general on camera. 'It went to his head,' said one ex-CNDP officer, 'and the Rwandans didn't like that.'[38] Many other ex-CNDP officers testified to this falling out between Rwanda and Nkunda. 'There had always been tensions, but when they saw him dancing with [UN

36 See Appendix 3: Structure of the CNDP in October 2008.

37 Usalama Project Interviewees #108 and #111, Goma, 1 September 2012.

38 Usalama Project Interviewee #110, Bukavu, 23 August 2012.

envoy and former Nigerian president Olusegun] Obasanjo in a white *bubu*, and talking about regime change in Kinshasa, they thought he was getting too big.'[39]

The Ihusi Agreement and the rise of Bosco Ntaganda

Obasanjo's appointment as the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy to the Great Lakes demonstrated a new international commitment to a negotiated solution to the war in North Kivu. He began a round of regional diplomacy, organizing a meeting between presidents Kabila and Kagame and other heads of state in Nairobi on 7 November 2008. Media opportunities aside, however, the real negotiations were held in private between Kigali and Kinshasa. As with the previous integration process, there was no official text of an agreement and no formal signing ceremony. So the terms of the deal only emerged gradually—but its impact was felt almost immediately.

On 4 January 2009, Ntaganda announced the removal of Nkunda as the head of the CNDP on the grounds of mismanagement. This unilateral move astonished senior CNDP officers. One described how he called Nkunda after hearing Ntaganda's statement on the radio, to find his ousted commander just as surprised as he was.[40] Twelve days later, Ntaganda appeared at a public ceremony at the Ihusi Hotel in Goma, flanked by the Rwandan Defence Minister and the Congolese Interior Minister, and announced he was joining the Congolese army with the rest of the CNDP to fight the FDLR.

While the main official purpose of the Rwanda-DRC deal was to launch joint operations against the FDLR, the initial target was the CNDP, which had to be forced to integrate into the Congolese army. Nkunda, having been invited by the Rwandan army, crossed the frontier at Kabuhanga on 22 January with Colonel Sultani Makenga and several other officers.

39 Usalama Project Interviewee #105, Goma, 26 August 2012.

40 Usalama Project Interviewee #110, Bukavu, 23 August 2012.

He was met by Rwandan officers and put under arrest while the other officers were given instructions to integrate the Congolese army.

In the aftermath of Nkunda's removal from the scene, the Rwandan army launched an offensive—dubbed *Umoja Wetu* (Our Unity), with its Congolese counterparts, against the FDLR, sending up to 4,000 troops across the border for a month. As for the CNDP, senior officers were promised key positions within the Congolese army and were given guarantees that they would not be transferred out of the Kivus. The agreement was formalized on 23 March 2009 with the formal signatures by the Kinshasa government of two separate agreements: one with the CNDP, the other with separate armed groups. The date, hardly remarkable at the time, would resonate with significance, three years later almost to the day, when the M23 rebellion was launched.

Ntaganda and officers close to Nkunda profited handsomely from the arrangement. Ntaganda became deputy commander of the government's latest offensives against the FDLR and other dissident Congolese armed groups, enabling him to wield extensive influence and appoint ex-CNDP commanders to lucrative posts in the Kivus. The mineral-rich mining areas of Nyabibwe, Bisie, and Bibatama all fell under the control of ex-CNDP in 2009 and they extended their control to other mining areas later.[41] And when Kinshasa's overall military commander, General Dieudonné Amuli, was injured in a plane crash in July 2011, Ntaganda became even more influential, signing off on all major operations and nominations in the Kivus.

Nor had the entire CNDP leadership wholly committed to integration; many were hedging their bets. Aided by the complicity of Congolese officers, the CNDP manipulated the process in its favour. They were able to integrate some Rwandans into the Congolese army, among them a few

41 'Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC' (UN document S/2009/603), 23 November 2009, pp. 54–57.

officers who had never even been part of the CNDP. Some of the officers did not end up integrated, while others did.[42]

In purely financial terms, the CNDP lied about its membership of 5,276 soldiers, submitting a list of more than twice that number to profit from the salaries and food accruing to these 'ghost soldiers,' and to be able to continue recruiting to bolster their ranks. As for weapons transfers, there were only around half as many light weapons handed over as there were soldiers, and almost no heavy weapons.[43] 'We stored many of our weapons in arms caches,' one ex-CNDP officer said. 'The biggest one was probably on Ntaganda's ranch in Bunyole, but there were others as well.'[44]

It seems extraordinary that Kinshasa would allow the process to be subverted so quickly and so obviously. According to a senior Congolese intelligence officer, 'It was part appeasement, part disorganization, part greed. Kinshasa didn't want to offend the CNDP, that was sure. But we were also disorganized, we didn't follow up… And then I have to say that some made a fortune with the CNDP in some of these areas. Why complain if you are all making money?'[45]

The removal of Nkunda and the boosting of Ntaganda prompted irrevocable splits within the CNDP. Many ex-CNDP officers were deeply unhappy with the peace deal, with Rwandan meddling, and especially with the arrest of Nkunda, who had commanded the respect and loyalty of many in senior positions. The strongest opponent to Ntaganda's leadership was Colonel Makenga, formerly commander of Rutshuru sector. Immediately after Nkunda's arrest, Makenga reportedly returned from Rwanda to Rutshuru, where he discussed the crisis with senior colleagues at Rumangabo camp.

42 The Usalama Project was shown the names of several of these individuals by a CNDP officer in an official document.

43 'Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC 2009', p. 45

44 Usalama Project Interviewee #101, Goma, 2 September 2012.

45 Usalama Project Interviewee #113, Goma, May 2012.

With his men reluctant to taken on the Rwandan units deployed in the hills around them, Makenga was forced to accept integration, becoming deputy commander of South Kivu operations, the second-highest position for an ex-CNDP officer, but far away from the CNDP heartland of Masisi. Many who still nursed pro-Nkunda tendencies joined him in South Kivu, benefitting from Makenga's patronage.

Internal tensions often found expression on ethnic lines. Ntaganda was accused by many ex-CNDP of bias towards officers from his Gogwe sub-ethnic group, as well as those who had been in Ituri with him.[46] In order to bolster his position, he obtained the release of his close friend Colonel Innocent 'India Queen' Kaina, who was in prison in Kinshasa, and several Gogwe commanders from the Rwandan army also joined him. All the ex-CNDP officers interviewed for this report agreed that ethnic divides sharpened notably under Ntaganda's leadership.[47]

On one occasion, ex-CNDP officers got into a dispute in a hotel in downtown Goma, with tensions exacerbated by unequal sharing in profits from the timber trade. One group of pro-Nkunda officers—among them Lieutenant Colonel Emmanuel Nsengiyumva and Major Charles Rusigiza—defected and joined the *Forces patriotiques pour la libération du Congo* (FPLC, Patriotic Forces for the Liberation of Congo), a small multi-ethnic group based in Rutshuru and hostile to the Rwandan government.[48]

Most importantly, these rifts within the CNDP coincided with divisions within the Rwandan government. In February 2010, General Kayumba Nyamwasa, the former head of the Rwandan army, fled Rwanda to South Africa. Several months later he narrowly escaped an assassination attempt. Following his defection, several other army officers in Rwanda were arrested, as Kayumba and other Rwandan exiles began to set up

46 See Appendix 4: Ethnic and clan divisions among Congolese Tutsi.

47 See Appendix 5: The CNDP split (with ethnic/clan affiliation).

48 'Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC' (UN document S/2010/596), 29 November 2010, pp. 18–19.

the Rwandan National Congress (RNC) opposition party. Kayumba had links to officers within the CNDP, some of whom he had commanded in the Rwandan army between 1990 and 1996. Following Nkunda's arrest, he made contact with both Makenga and the defectors to the FPLC, with two aims: setting up a new alliance and encouraging rifts within the Kigali elite that might result in a coup against President Kagame.[49]

Ntaganda clamped down violently on his competitors, in coordination with the Rwandan security services. On 20 June 2010, armed men, reportedly including one of Ntaganda's own bodyguards, mutilated and killed Denis Ntare Semadwinga at his home in Gisenyi. Ntare was one of the most respected members of the Congolese Tutsi community, a close political advisor to Nkunda—and had also been a member of Mobutu's inner circle. The murder was quickly followed by the assassination of several other Nkunda loyalists: Major Antoine Balibuno, Emerita Munyashwe, Patrice Habarurema and Olivier Muhindo.[50]

Many among the CNDP's original political leadership, handpicked by Nkunda, fled from Ntaganda and dispersed across the region as Kigali installed its own proxies: first Desiré Kamanzi, then, in December 2009, Philippe Gafishi. Both were relative unknowns in the Kivus and had built their careers in Rwanda. When Gafishi's deputy tried to create a new branch of the CNDP in May 2010, he was arrested by security services in Rwanda.[51]

49 Usalama Project Interviewees #103 and #105, Goma, August 2012.

50 Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC 2010', p. 45. Habarurema and Muhindo were killed just a year after the had tried to found a new wing of the CNDP. They were arrested in Rwanda and then, after their release, killed in southern Uganda.

51 Usalama Project Interviewee #114, Goma, 13 June 2012. See also ICG, 'No Stability in the Kivus Despite Rapprochement with Rwanda', Africa Report No 165, 16 November 2010, pp. 15–16.

4. The M23 mutiny

For Kinshasa, the integration of the CNDP had always been a temporary solution. 'We were going to integrate them, slowly wear down their chain of command, then deploy their officers elsewhere in the country,' said a high-ranking Congolese army officer in Goma.[52] Instead, the integration process had the opposite effect: it empowered the CNDP leadership, making many of them rich and allowing them to co-opt officers from other armed groups. Ntaganda himself made millions of dollars from mineral smuggling, embezzlement of military funds, and tax rackets.

The Congolese government did try on several occasions to deploy ex-CNDP commanders outside the Kivus, beginning in September 2010. These attempts met with steadfast opposition from the former rebels, who cited security concerns, anti-Tutsi discrimination, and the fact that the campaign against the FDLR had not reached a satisfactory conclusion.[53] In response to these pressures, Ntaganda began strengthening his alliance with veterans of other armed groups, including PARECO—once the CNDP's worst enemies. In September and October 2010, he held several meetings at Minova on Lake Kivu with PARECO officers, arguing that they had been unfairly marginalized by a corrupt group of Congolese generals and that only he could help them.

Further pressure to crack down on the ex-CNDP came through the regimentation process.[54] Beginning in February 2011, the goal was to merge army units into regiments of 1,200 soldiers, getting rid of parallel chains of command (including those managed by the ex-CNDP) and exposing the fiction of the 'ghost soldiers'. The operation backfired once again:

52 Usalama Project Interviewee #113, Goma, 29 August 2012.

53 Radio Okapi, 'Nord-Kivu : les soldats issus du CNDP refusent la permutation', 30 September 2010.

54 Usalama Project Interviewee #115, Bukavu, 19 August 2012.

instead of weakening Ntaganda's web of patronage, it was reinforced, as he named his associates to new command positions. Throughout this period, the well-oiled ex-CNDP machinery took advantage of Kinshasa's disorganization, consistently outmanoeuvring them.

Tensions within the ex-CNDP also contributed to the mutiny. Despite reconciliation efforts and a pledge to share spoils more equally, relations between Makenga and Ntaganda were still chilly. At the same time, Kinshasa was grooming Colonel Innocent Gahizi, the ex-CNDP deputy commander of North Kivu, as an alternative to Ntaganda. These divisions precipitated dissent—the feeling was, 'if we wait too long, we will be too divided to act,' as one M23 officer said.[55]

The final straw were elections. A UN report from December 2011 was prescient:

> The Group has determined that former members of FRF [*Forces républicaines fédéralistes*/Federalist Republic Forces, a small Tutsi militia based in South Kivu], CNDP and PARECO fear that the elections slated for 2011 and 2012 pose significant risks to their positions in FARDC. Led by General Bosco Ntaganda… these former armed groups have deployed officers to command positions by means of the regimentation process in North and South Kivu, giving them the capacity to influence the electoral process in favour of their candidates and to respond to any popular contestation of the electoral results by rival armed groups.[56]

Who would blink first? Both sides knew that Ntaganda's domineering influence over the Congolese army in the Kivus was not sustainable.

Kinshasa's plan to dismantle the ex-CNDP networks was made explicit when Katumba Mwanke, President Kabila's closest advisor, visited Kigali on 5 February 2012 to ask for Rwandan help to deploy these officers,

55 Usalama Project Interviewee #103, 15 October 2012 (by telephone).

56 'Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC' (UN document S/2011/738), 2 December 2011, p. 78.

THE 23 MARCH 2009 AGREEMENT

The M23 claims that it mutinied because Kinshasa did not respect the 23 March 2009 agreement. To what extent is this true? Here are the most important clauses of that agreement:

- The CNDP would integrate its troops into the national army and police, and transform itself into a political party. This is the clause that Kinshasa insists on the most, as it stipulates that the CNDP would pursue any grievances through political channels. CNDP integrated around 5,300 soldiers and received over a quarter of high-level command positions in North and South Kivu.
- CNDP administrative officials would be redeployed elsewhere. The CNDP complains that, despite repeated cabinet shuffles in Kinshasa since the deal, they never received any ministerial positions. But the 23 March agreement itself was vague, specifying neither how many positions the CNDP would obtain, nor at what level. In the end, they were given several posts in the territorial administration, a provincial ministry, and positions as provincial advisors.
- The government would revive talks with the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and neighbouring countries to promote the repatriation of refugees. This was done, albeit slowly, and a tripartite UNHCR-Congo-Rwanda agreement was signed on 17 February 2010. However, very few refugees returned, due to a lack of both security and available land, but also because of manipulations by Congolese and ex-CNDP officials.
- The government would recognize the ranks of the CNDP's military and police officers. Although the M23 stresses this point, most of its senior officers' ranks were eventually confirmed in 2010. This was not the case for some lower- and mid-ranking officers. A related grievance—unequal pay for ex-CNDP commanders—has little basis, given how much officers such as Ntaganda and Makenga benefitted from tax rackets, mineral smuggling, and bank heists between 2009-12.
- Both parties would participate in a national follow-up committee that would be accompanied by international envoys. The UN/African Union envoys soon wrapped up their work and the Congolese follow-up meetings took place very sporadically.

promising in return economic opportunities in the Congo. He allegedly offered direct Rwandair flights from Kigali to Kinshasa and increased collaboration on hydroelectric and methane gas projects on their eastern border. One Rwandan security official commented angrily: 'Do they think we just want their money? He stooped too low.'[57]

Initial failures

The first attempt at mutiny—in January at Bukavu—was botched. Makenga was involved in planning this insurrection, but stayed in the background, allowing a group of mainly non-Tutsi disaffected army officers and political malcontents calling themselves the *Conseil supérieur de la paix* (CONSUP, Higher Peace Council) to make the running.[58]

The government then began testing officers' loyalty, first by asking Ntaganda to send troops to prepare for an annual military parade in Kinshasa in February 2012, then by inviting ex-CNDP officers to a seminar on army reform in the capital in March. Ntaganda refused both, ordering his men not to attend. Kinshasa began mobilizing officers individually, with promises of money and promotions. At least five senior officers attended the seminar, among them Colonels Innocent Gahizi, Eric Bizimana, Richard Bisamaza, and Innocent Kabundi, with more coming for a second seminar held a month later.

At the same time, Ntaganda's personal future became a matter of concern. Following the November 2011 elections, which had been marred by large-scale rigging and irregularities, donors decided that a re-run would not be feasible, but that they could take advantage of Kabila's perceived weakness to push for other reforms.[59] One of these was the arrest and transfer of Ntaganda to the International Criminal Court

57 Usalama Project Interviewee #116, Kigali, 9 August 2012.

58 Usalama Project Interviewees #115, Bukavu, 19 August 2012, and #110, Bukavu, 18 August 2012; 'Interim report of the Group of Experts on the DRC 2012', p. 32. A list of suspected CONSUP members, provided by Congolese army, is on file with the Usalama Project.

59 Usalama Project interviews with western diplomats, Kinshasa, March 2012.

(ICC) on seven counts of crimes against humanity allegedly committed in Ituri.[60] Pressure increased when Thomas Lubanga—whom Ntaganda had served as chief of staff in Ituri during the peak of violence there—was convicted by the ICC for recruitment of child soldiers on 14 March 2012.

Lubanga's conviction triggered mobilization in earnest. After a succession of statements demanding the full implementation of the 23 March 2009 peace deal and denouncing anti-Tutsi discrimination within the army, ex-CNDP officers held secret meetings in Goma and Gisenyi in mid-March. Then the defections started, simultaneously in North and South Kivu.

These moves, again, failed.[61] Within several days, most ex-CNDP troops had re-defected back to the army. 'The soldiers were tired of seeing their commanders get rich and not give them anything,' said one ex-CNDP officer. 'Why risk your lives for commanders you don't believe in?'[62] Another commented, 'officers told Ntaganda: "We can do this, we are prepared." But they weren't.'[63] Most of the 365 mutineers in South Kivu were arrested or rejoined the Congolese army on their own accord. The subsequent wave of defections in North Kivu also faltered. Several commanders surrendered, while others were forced to retreat to the highlands of central Masisi, where they hastily recruited dozens of new recruits.

The government's response to these failed mutinies and the defections that had enabled them to happen was to ask Rwandan officials to help them stem the tide of defections. Officials from both countries met in Gisenyi, Rwanda, on 8 April, a meeting attended by Makenga and a group

60 The case (ICC-01/04-02/06: The Prosecutor v. Bosco Ntaganda) can be found online at http://www.icc-cpi.int.

61 In South Kivu, the plan was for ex-CNDP officers to seize a weapons depot at Lulimba in Fizi territory, then make their way north to capture Baraka and Uvira. At the same time, Makenga was to have taken Bukavu, while an ex-CNDP commander in Nyabibwe was supposed to mutiny. The mutineers overestimated their strength and ability. On 1 April, their key man in Lulimba was arrested as he tried to seize the armoury, while at Uvira the mutineers were forced to flee into the mountains.

62 Usalama Project Interviewee #103, Goma, 23 August 2012.

63 Usalama Project Interviewee #105, Goma, 28 August 2012.

of ex-CNDP officers who had not yet defected. It was agreed that Ntaganda should be allowed to stay at his ranch in Masisi, while a commission of integration would be set up to decide the fate of other mutineers.[64] But when President Kabila visited Goma the following day, he insisted that deserters would face military justice instead of reintegration. Furthermore, he said, ex-CNDP troops would be redeployed elsewhere in the country—this sudden about-face infuriated the Rwandan government.

This was a crucial turning point. 'Up until mid-April,' one foreign diplomat said, 'the Rwandan government appears to have played a positive role, dissuading deserters and talking to the Congolese.'[65] However, according to testimony by Ugandan officials and M23 deserters, it is now clear that the Rwandan government was involved in planning the mutiny since 2011—and in mid-April 2012 they were forced to move from tacit to overt support of the M23, to prevent it from being stamped out entirely.[66]

Under heavy pressure from Congolese troops, the mutineers moved out of Masisi to a narrow stretch of hills close to the Rwandan border on 4 May. 'They needed a rear base,' said one ex-CNDP officer who refused to join the mutiny. 'Rwanda told them to come.'[67] On the same day, Makenga and his officers finally defected, crossing into Rwanda to meet Rwandan officers before joining Ntaganda.

Two days later, the group issued a statement announcing the creation of the new 'M23' rebellion, with the goal of implementing the stalled 23 March 2009 agreement. The M23 political leadership was made up mostly

64 Usalama Project interview with Congolese presidential advisor, Goma, 17 June 2012, and Rwandan presidential advisor, Kigali, 20 July 2012. See also Colette Braeckman interview with James Kabarebe: 'Cartes sur la table: Les quatre verités du Général James Kabarebe,' 29 August 2012; http://blog.lesoir.be/colette-braeckman/2012/08/29/cartes-sur-table-les-quatre-verites-du-general-james-kabarebe/.

65 Usalama Project telephone interview with western diplomat, 28 May 2012.

66 'Addendum to the Group of Experts of the DRC's interim report (S/2012/348) concerning Rwandan government violations of the arms embargo and sanctions regime' (UN document S/2012/348/Add.1), 27 June 2012.

67 Usalama Project Interviewee #117, Goma, 21 August 2012.

of former CNDP loyalists, with Jean-Marie Runiga Lugerero, the CNDP's representative in Kinshasa, as political coordinator. However, there were also some new names, allegedly appointed after pressure by Rwanda.

In June, the M23—by now a force numbering between 1,500 and 2,500 troops—went on the offensive, taking control of the Bunagana border crossing on 6 July and advancing to Rutshuru, the territorial capital. After retreating again toward the Ugandan border, M23 advanced again to take Rutshuru on 25 July. Since then, they have extended their reach slightly to the north, toward Ishasha on the Ugandan border, and toward around 25km from Goma in the south. Since August, the frontlines have been more or less stable due to an informal ceasefire as talks continue between regional countries in Kampala through the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR).[68] Key priorities for the eleven members of the conference—which continues to hold regular meetings—were a crackdown on the illicit trade in minerals and the deployment of a neutral force to defeat both the M23 and the FDLR.

As a by-product of the opening round of ICGLR talks, an informal ceasefire was established. For the FARDC, this was preferable to mounting a new offensive against the combined strength of the M23 and the Rwandan army: better, they thought, to wait until diplomatic pressure forced Kigali to end its support. As for the M23, the rebels took advantage of the informal truce to address their most critical challenge: manpower. The group set up a training camp in Tshanzu and Rumangabo, where the CNDP had had a similar installation, and trained somewhere between 800 and 1,500 new troops between May and August 2012.

The M23 also began to beef up its political wing. It named several new local chiefs, set up a tax collection network, and established a formal liaison office for humanitarians working in the area—structures reminiscent to those of the CNDP era. They also established two websites (www.

68 The ICGLR consisted of Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, and Zambia. South Sudan has not yet joined.

soleildugraben.com and congodrcnews.com), a Facebook fan page and several Twitter accounts run by them or people close to them. On 20 October, in a move to further boost their legitimacy, they renamed their armed wing the *Armée révolutionaire du Congo* (ARC, Congolese Revolutionary Army).

Rwanda and the regional dimension

Rwandan support for M23 has now been well documented, in particular by the UN Group of Experts.[69] Their conclusions have been confirmed by Human Rights Watch, by MONUSCO, and by at least three embassies in Kigali through internal investigations.[70] Research for this report—including interviews with over a dozen M23 defectors, local eyewitnesses and 15 ex-CNDP officers who stayed in the Congolese army—supports their conclusions.

The Rwandan government initially intervened to prop up a failing mutiny, patching up relations between Ntaganda and Makenga by allowing, and probably encouraging, Laurent Nkunda to mobilize Makenga and other officers close to him.[71] In late 2012, Nkunda was still officially under house arrest in Rwanda but was seen in public in Gisenyi and at M23 headquarters.[72]

Kigali was also involved in intensive mobilization of community leaders, hosting dozens of meetings in Gisenyi, Ruhengeri and Kigali at least from May 2012 onwards. High-ranking Rwandan security officials often spoke during these meetings. 'They told us that Kinshasa would never do anything for us,' said a participant in one of these meetings, 'that now was the time to finish what we had tried to begin with the

69 'Addendum to the interim report of the Group of Experts on the DRC 2012'.

70 Usalama Project interviews with diplomats, Kigali, August and September 2012.

71 Usalama Project Interviewees #101, #103, #105, #108, and #111 in August and September 2012. 'Addendum to the interim report of the Group of Experts 2012', p. 13.

72 Usalama Project Interviewees #118, Goma, 27 August 2012, and #103, Goma, 23 August 2012. 'Addendum to the interim report of the Group of Experts 2012', p. 13.

RCD and the CNDP.'[73] According to several people who attended, the final aim was to bring about secession—although it is difficult to know if this was just a mobilizing tool or whether the leaders truly believed it.[74]

In its earliest phase, the M23 only had between 300 and 700 troops. They were armed with the weapons and ammunition that they had been able to carry with them from Masisi and Bukavu, leaving a large part of their weapons in arms caches—which made it all the more suspicious when they re-emerged bristling with heavy weapons and stocks of ammunition in June.[75] They faced a well-resourced, if poorly organized, offensive by the Congolese army, which deployed at least three times as many troops against the M23. But the Rwandans provided crucial back-up, including a supply of weapons, ammunition, medical care, recruitment and free passage for troops and politicians. The Rwandan army contributed troops for key attacks, such as the M23 assaults on Bunagana and Rutshuru.

Increasingly, there is also evidence that the Ugandan government has provided support to the M23, most conspicuously during the second battle for Rutshuru town on 24–25 July. Sources within the Ugandan government and M23 have confirmed direct military support by Ugandan army units, as well as the provision of weapons, ammunition, and facilitation of recruitment.[76] Locals along the border in Busanza *groupement* (administrative sector) observed trucks with soldiers crossing the border from Uganda, and sources within M23 and the Ugandan security services have confirmed support from Kampala, although extent and motive are still uncertain.[77] An M23 delegation also spent several months in

73 Usalama Project Interviewee #127, Goma, 25 June 2012.

74 Usalama Project Interviewees #105, #103, and #127, Goma, August and September 2012.

75 Commander Mandevu, a Hutu former FDLR officer who leads his own militia in the Virunga National Park, was also given some ex-CNDP weapons at this time, as he emerged as a key M23 ally in controlling the wilderness behind Nyiragongo Volcano.

76 Usalama Project Interviewee #128, 11 September 2012 (by telephone).

77 Usalama Project Interviewee #129, 29 September 2012 (by telephone).

Kampala between June and September 2012, where they have rented several houses. This evidence raises serious questions about the efforts made by President Yoweri Museveni as the chairman of the International Conference on the Great Lakes to bring an end to the crisis.

Trying to broaden the rebellion

To further strengthen their position, the M23 has tried to stitch together a web of alliances across the region. These new allies, none of whom have more than several hundred troops, are supposed to help tie down Congolese troops on other front lines, but also have a propaganda effect, highlighting the derelict nature of the state and distracting attention away from the M23's close connection with Rwanda. The alliances, however, have proven to be both immature and fickle, not least because the M23's most natural supporters have refused to join up.

The elites of the Congolese Hutu and Banyamulenge communities—which, along with the North Kivu Tutsi community, formed the backbone of both the RCD and, initially at least, the CNDP—have largely boycotted the M23. Hutu elites surrounding former governor Eugène Serufuli left the CNDP in 2005–6 and are not trusted by the M23 or members of the Rwandan government. Other leaders—such as Bigembe Turinkiko, Katoyi sector chief, or many Hutu leaders from the Bwisha chiefdom where the M23 is located—had never joined the RCD, and have not joined any of its successors.

As for the Banyamulenge, they form a divided community. Even during the RCD's time, some in the community opposed Rwandan influence in the eastern DRC. Many Banyamulenge leaders are wary of joining another Rwandan-backed movement, angry over what they perceive to have been their own use (or abuse) by Kigali in the past. So the M23 rebels have had to resort to other, less reliable allies, including groups that use fiercely anti-Rwanda rhetoric.

Others, however, have joined:

- *Forces de défense Congolaises* (FDC, Congolese Defence Forces): This group of primarily Hunde and Nyanga fighters, based in

southwestern Masisi, had been backed since its inception in 2010 by Ntaganda, as part of his offensive against the FDLR. It has since split, due to internal disagreements over an alliance with Rwanda, but one wing under self-styled General Luanda Butu still collaborates with the M23.

- *Nduma Defence of Congo* (NDC): This militia, based in eastern Walikale, is led by Sheka Ntaberi, previously a close ally of the FDLR, but since 2010 an Ntaganda collaborator. With ex-CNDP troops, he assassinated two Congolese army colonels in April 2012. In late August, the NDC and FDC, along with the *Raia Mutomboki* (see below), helped ex-CNDP defectors in southern Masisi launch attacks against army positions.
- *Raia Mutomboki*: This name has been adopted by disparate armed groups across the Kivus that share an anti-FDLR (and often anti-Rwandan in general) ideology but not necessarily the same command structure. Factions of this group have been allied to the ex-CNDP since early 2012, when Makenga began sending weapons and liaison officers to join them. This alliance, which has the support of some local chiefs, is particular strong in southern Masisi, around Ngungu and Remeka. However, other *Raia Mutomboki* factions strongly oppose the M23.
- *Union des patriotes Congolais pour la paix* (UPCP, Union of Congolese Patriots for Peace): This new group is led by Colonel Albert Kahasha (aka 'Foka Mike') and self-styled General Sikuli Lafontaine. In May, Kahasha and Sikuli—both anti-Rwanda ideologues—struck an alliance with the M23 and travelled to their bases in Rutshuru to coordinate operations, claiming that the two groups had the same enemies.[78] UPCP has positions in southern Lubero and in Rutshuru territory.

78 'Interim report of Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo concerning violations of the arms embargo and sanctions regime by the Government of

- *Force Œcuménique pour la libération du Congo* (FOLC, Ecumenical Force for the Liberation of the Congo): This strangely-named group has been built around members of the former RCD-ML rebellion in northern Beni territory. It is led by Colonel Jacques Nyoro and is linked to former Congolese minister of foreign affairs, Mbusa Nyamwisi. It has loose ties with the M23, as well as alleged ties to both Uganda and Rwanda.
- *Rassemblement Congolais pour le renouveau* (RCR, Congolese Rally for Renewal): This group of several dozen fighters is led by self-styled Colonel Bede Rusagara, a member of the Fuliro community based in the hills above the Ruzizi plain in South Kivu. A former member of the CNDP, Rusagara was arrested by FARDC in early 2012 and, with the help of Makenga, released in April at the beginning of the mutiny. Rusagara has since put together a ramshackle coalition of soldiers from the Banyamulenge, Fuliro and even Burundian communities. He is allied to Nkingi Muhima, a Banyamulenge army deserter, who has been trying with limited success to ally Banyamulenge to the M23. The RCR is also in contact with another Banyamulenge group, the *Alliance pour la libération de l'est du Congo* (ALEC, Alliance for the Liberation of the East of the Congo).
- *Forces de résistance patriotiques en Ituri* (FRPI, Patriotic Forces of Resistance in Ituri): The largest of several armed groups with links to the M23 that have sprung up in Ituri, an administrative sector in eastern Orientale province. Led by self-styled General Banaloki, aka 'Cobra Matata', the FRPI has sent a delegation to Kigali to discuss collaboration, while at the same time pursuing negotiations with Kinshasa. At the time of writing, Banaloki's troops were waiting to be integrated into the national army.

Rwanda' (UN document S/2012/348), 21 June 2012, pp. 31–32, suggests that Kahasha has also collaborated with an FDLR splinter faction, the *Ralliement pour l'unité et la démocratie* (RUD, Rally for Unity and Democracy).

> Other new armed groups linked to the M23, stemming mostly from the Hema community, are the *Coalition des groupes armées de l'Ituri* (COGAI, Coalition of Armed Groups in Ituri) and the *Mouvement de résistance populaire au Congo* (MRPC, Popular Resistance Movement in the Congo).

The M23 has also suffered from internal friction, especially between the Makenga and Ntaganda factions. The latter, while still involved in the command structure, has been marginalized and was even briefly placed under arrest. The Rwandan army has allowed Laurent Nkunda to use his influence to build greater cohesion within the group—for neither Makenga nor Ntaganda can match his charisma or leadership qualities. Also, compared with the commanders who staffed the CNDP, this rebellion's military leaders are mostly uneducated and not as prominent. Aside from Ntaganda, none of these officers had a rank higher than major when the transition began in 2003.

There are other challenges as well. Over half of the CNDP's officer corps—including a majority of senior officers—has decided to remain in the national army, despite heavy lobbying by their former colleagues and by Kigali. Most ordinary M23 foot soldiers have been press-ganged into the rebellion and suffer from low morale. Several hundred have already defected.

5. Analysis: What drives the M23?

In 2012 the M23 became the focus of global media and diplomatic attention, but, as earlier sections have shown, it was not a new phenomenon. The M23 is, in many ways, similar to its predecessors, the CNDP and the RCD. In its current form, the rebellion is led by a largely Tutsi military elite, with hesitant support from some parts of Goma's upper class and decisive backing from Rwanda. While the M23 and its various allies can create disorder and inflict widespread violence—possibly a strategic goal in itself—it is unlikely that they will be able to control large areas of territory without broadening their social base or receiving further Rwandan support in the form of an overt invasion of eastern Congo.

Global attention does not mean that a solution is likely in the near future. At the core of the crisis is a problem that involves Rwanda, local elites, and the government in Kinshasa. Since 1996, the area around Goma—especially the highlands of Masisi and Bwito populated mostly by descendants of immigrants from Rwanda—has been ruled by elites closely linked to the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in Kigali. This history has bound local elites and their constituencies together in a potent web of self-interest, ethnic solidarity, and distrust of the Kinshasa government. While this binding network has begun to fray, it is unlikely to unravel altogether—or change the way it perceives Kinshasa.

More than nine months into the M23 rebellion, there were no plausible solutions on the negotiating table. Although in September 2012, Kinshasa initiated discreet contacts with the M23, Congolese army commanders continued to insist on a battlefield solution. Despite past military failures, they sent thousands of troops to the Kivus, setting the stage for the next round of fighting. International donors are conspicuously reluctant to add either to military commitments or to the expense of peacekeeping in DRC (the cost of MONUSCO having reached USD 1.4 billion per year). In the meantime, the M23 has taken advantage of the break in fighting to forge new alliances and train as many as a thousand new troops.

Regional diplomatic efforts—primarily conducted via the ICGLR—have focused on the creation of a neutral military force to carry out offensive operations against the M23 and the FDLR. By October 2012, only Tanzania had committed troops to this hypothetical mission. Kenya, Angola, and Congo-Brazzaville appeared reluctant to conduct risky counterinsurgency operations in the eastern DRC, and the Rwandan government has begun to lobby in private against any such military intervention.

President Museveni's role as ICGLR chairman, meanwhile, came into question, following allegations of Ugandan government support to the M23.[79] As for the Rwandans, Kigali appeared set on a policy of subverting the ICGLR process from within: affecting to support it while impeding any meaningful outcome. Little progress was made at a mini-summit at the UN in September 2012, while relations between Rwanda and the DRC continued to decline. In the media, President Kagame lambasted his neighbour, along with the M23, in harsh terms, accusing the Congolese government of being 'ideologically bankrupt' and alleging that 'it does not respect or work for its own citizens'. That tone was matched by the DRC government spokesman, Lambert Mende.

The situation in October 2012 remained highly volatile. The Congolese government was clearly not committed to a negotiated solution, pointing to the repeated failures of appeasement and integration of armed groups in the eastern Congo. One of the DRC's negotiators at the ICGLR said: 'We are in touch with the M23 through the Ugandan government, but they keep on making us go around in circles. In any case, can you imagine Makenga reintegrated into the Congolese army?'[80] On that point, the M23 agreed: Colonel Sultani Makenga has told his troops that he would be 'a dog' if he were to reintegrate into the army, according to one M23 member.[81]

79 Unofficial draft of the 'Final report of the UN Group of Experts 2012', leaked to Reuters news agency, 16 October 2012.

80 Usalama Project Interviewee #130, 7 October 2012 (by telephone).

81 Usalama Project Interviewee #103, Goma, 28 August 2012.

The M23's initial goal of seizing large towns in the eastern Congo remains. The political and humanitarian consequences of fighting over towns such as Goma could be disastrous—and, as well as triggering a huge flow of refugees and internally displaced people, the current standoff has prompted other armed groups to mobilize, either as allies of the M23 or as a counterweight. They, too, will be difficult to disarm and reintegrate. Congolese military officials say they have been in touch with members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), in particular Angola and South Africa, who are said to be considering supporting renewed military action against the M23. Such a move, while still hypothetical, could seriously affect broader stability in the region.

Addressing Rwandan concerns

The extent of Rwanda's support for the M23 since its inception is now well established. But this general picture should not obscure important nuances. Officers in the CNDP and its successors have always been wary of Rwanda's influence. Nkunda himself reportedly bristled at his ally's overbearing attitude and many CNDP senior officers were, at various points, arrested by Rwandan security officials––including Makenga himself. 'We didn't like the RPF,' one ex-CNDP officer said, 'but we often had similar interests.'[82] Another commented: 'Don't believe for one second that Rwanda supported us because they were our friends, or that they sympathized with Congolese Tutsi. They supported us because they needed us. And when they no longer needed us, they turned on us.'[83]

Rwandan support for CNDP began early, with pressure on Nkunda not to join the national army in 2003, but it did not remain constant. For much of the CNDP's history, Rwandan influence was limited to advice, minor material support, and help with recruitment of politicians and soldiers. It was not until the military escalation of 2008 that Kigali despatched entire units across the border to attack the Rumangabo

82 Usalama Project Interviewee #108, Goma, 29 August 2012.

83 Usalama Project Interviewee #110, Bukavu, 18 August 2012.

military camp and to support the CNDP's advance on Goma—and even then, it was only several hundred men. When CNDP evolved into M23, however, both scale and intensity of support increased dramatically, not least because of the new rebellion's early difficulties.

Few have sought to understand Rwanda's motives—to ask the question posed by Kigali in response to one particularly damning UN report:

> What would Rwanda be seeking to achieve through M23 that it could not achieve through other means? What would be Rwanda's end goal in supporting a mutiny in DRC? What strategic purpose would be served by active involvement in destabilizing the central government of the DRC?[84]

Answers to these questions are difficult, requiring as they do an understanding of the RPF's own internal decision-making processes. It is, however, likely that naked economic interests play less of a role than is often suggested. Instead, a complex web of political and economic motives has fuelled Rwandan intervention, steeped in a security-driven culture of control.

In interviews conducted over several months during 2012 with RDF and ex-CNDP officers, as well as other officials linked to the rebellion, a variety of views were expressed as to why Rwanda needs such a sphere of influence. Even those supposedly at the heart of the rebellion did not agree on the reasons that Rwanda was providing support. According to a former Nkunda bodyguard, 'Rwanda thinks this area belongs to them—maybe not as their land, but as an area where they need to have a say'.[85] 'They consider it as part of their sphere of influence,' a researcher who had interviewed dozens of RPF leaders said, 'it's a package of bundled interests, not one thing alone.'[86]

84 'Rwanda's Response to the Allegations Contained in the Addendum to the UN Group of Experts Interim Report', http://www.gov.rw/.

85 Usalama Project Interviewee #107, Goma, 24 August 2012.

86 .Usalama Project Interviewee #132, 10 October 2012 (by telephone).

Kigali officials have consistently highlighted security concerns. 'The RDF didn't care about Makenga or Nkunda or any of these guys,' said one Rwandan security official said. 'We supported the CNDP because of the FDLR.'[87] Several officers used a Swahili expression to stress their need for a buffer zone: '*Ulinzi inifanyiwa nje ya lupango*' (To defend a house, you have to stand outside).[88]

For the security argument to be plausible, an existential threat is not necessary. While the FDLR was undoubtedly a factor in backing the CNDP between 2004–9, the Rwandan rebels have been dramatically weakened since then, in part due to the Rwandan-Congolese peace deal. Since 2009, over 4,500 FDLR combatants have been repatriated through the UN to Rwanda—a figure that accounts for over half of their personnel.[89]

Estimates of remaining FDLR troops range from 1,500 to 3,000—Rwandan security officials in private put the figure at around 2,500, while downplaying their capacity.[90] Still, given the central place played by the genocide in Rwandan memory and politics, the FDLR are still a powerful symbolic threat. 'The RPF does not like to leave anything to chance,' one foreign diplomat in Kigali said. 'There is a culture of control here that permeates every aspect of life, especially security.'[91]

In this context of control, dissent within the Rwandan government—especially within the senior officers corps—is almost more important as a factor of serious irritation than the FDLR. Since the defection of General Kayumba Nyamwasa in February 2010, Rwanda has been worried about a possible alliance between these dissidents and other armed groups based in the eastern DRC, including the ex-CNDP and M23. One of the reasons

87 Usalama Project Interviewee #123, Gisenyi, 11 September 2012.

88 Usalama Project Interviewees #124, Gisenyi, 10 September 2012, and #103, Goma, 18 August 2012.

89 Internal MONUSCO documents on Demobilization, Disarmament, Repatriation, Resettlement, and Reintegration (DDRRR).

90 Usalama Project Interviewee #126, Washington, 17 September 2012.

91 Usalama Project Interviewee #131, Kigali, 14 September 2012.

Rwandan security services may have insisted on Makenga joining the M23 might have been because he had been one of the primary suspects within ex-CNDP circles of having links with Kayumba. By keeping him close, they would be able to better control him.

Divisions within senior RPF ranks have calmed since 2010 but may still play an important role in decision-making. According to some officers, as distrust has grown, there has been less internal criticism and a tendency toward more strident decisions. 'No one wants to be seen as weak at the moment,' one security officer said.[92]

Another strong influence in Kigali is personal distrust for the Kinshasa government, which is despised as corrupt and unstable. In other words, if the Congolese government cannot keep order in its eastern territories, the Rwandan government will be forced to do so. An ex-CNDP commander, who was part of Nkunda's general staff, commented: 'The Congo has no leadership, Rwanda knows that. So in order to protect their interests here, they need an army.'[93]

If security concerns are hard to analyse, economic interests are even more opaque. Rwanda's interest in Congolese mining during the 1996–2003 wars was well documented, and the Rwandan mineral sector has grown dramatically in recent years—to around USD 164 million in 2011—becoming the country's largest foreign exchange earner.[94] According to sources within the sector, between 10 and 30 per cent of this trade could consist of smuggled Congolese 're-exports'—and when Bosco Ntaganda was still part of the Congolese army, he helped facilitate this cross-border contraband.[95]

Nor is it only minerals that matter. Rwandan army officers keep cattle in Masisi and prominent Rwandan businesses—some owned by

92 Usalama Project interview with Rwandan security officer, Kigali, June 2012.

93 Usalama Project Interviewee #117, Goma, 22 August 2012.

94 Emmanuel Karake, 'Rwanda's surging mining sector,' *The New Times*, 2 September 2012.

95 Usalama Project Interviewee #122, Kigali, August 2012.

the ruling party—trade in everything from fuel to drinking water. The potential consumer base is immense: the population of North and South Kivu is around 11 million people, roughly the same as that of Rwanda. There is nothing illegal about much of this trade, however, and it is unclear how much of this trade benefits the RPF or individuals within the army—or whether Rwanda needs to maintain an armed group in the Kivus to sustain it. Set against Rwanda's GDP—USD 6.4 billion in 2011—and given the substantial reputational risks involved in war, it is unlikely that business interests alone would sway Kigali.

Addressing Congolese local elites

It is important to stress that the CNDP was never a Rwandan puppet. It drew its support from a variety of sources. The local businessmen, community leaders, priests, and politicians who backed the movement did so for three fundamental reasons: ethnic solidarity, personal interests, and extortion.

Ethnic solidarity was a key motive: a large majority of both CNDP and M23 military officers are Tutsi, as are many of its local supporters. While some of this support is self-interested, fear of persecution and discrimination also plays an important role. One of their sympathizers said: 'We just want to be accepted, to speak Kinyarwanda in Goma without feeling strange, not to be called names, to be able to travel in rural areas without fear.'[96] The is no common sense of history in the region—other communities are often blind to the Tutsi sense of victimhood, just as many Tutsi have little knowledge of abuses carried out by officers from their community.

To complicate matters further, some leaders have cynically manipulated these fears. In the early days of the M23 mutiny, Rwandan officials and mutineers published a series of allegations regarding hate crimes, only a few of which have been substantiated and some of which appear to be falsehoods. The most notorious case was an alleged massacre of

96 Usalama Project Interviewee #105, Gisenyi, 24 August 2012.

46 ex-CNDP officers in Dungu—but neither the local MONUSCO office, local civil society activists, nor ex-CNDP still in the national army have been able to confirm whether the massacre ever took place.

One of the most potent reminders of these ethnic divides are the 55,000 Congolese Tutsi who remain in refugee camps in Rwanda. Many have been there since 1996. The CNDP and M23 have recruited in these camps; and the Congolese government has dithered in promoting repatriation. A tripartite agreement was concluded between the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Rwanda and the DRC in February 2010, but returns to the DRC were haphazard and lacked transparency—increasing fears from other communities that Rwandans were being infiltrated into their territory.

Others supported the CNDP because of their own interests: they thought the group could bolster their political stature or protect their assets. Ranchers in Masisi and beyond—including, reportedly, the Rwandan business magnate Tribert Rujugiro—funded the CNDP to protect cattle worth millions of dollars.[97] Political opportunism could also be a factor. Raphael Soriano (aka Katebe Katoto), a former vice-president of the RCD who had seen his political star wane, reportedly gave money and equipment to the CNDP in order to gain a foothold in local politics.[98]

Finally, some contributed under duress, including businessmen. 'In Goma, many believed the CNDP would one day take the town, so they donated to avoid us closing them down,' an ex-CNDP officer involved in fundraising said.[99] Given the weakness of the Congolese intelligence services, there was unlikely to be any negative fallout for them, so they tried to make both sides happy.

97 'Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC' (UN document S/2008/773), 12 December 2008, pp. 13–14; Usalama Project Interviewees #109, #114, and #103, Goma, August and September 2012.

98 'Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC 2008', pp. 11–12.

99 Usalama Project Interviewee #105, Goma, 22 August 2012.

6. Recommendations

Every year, advocacy groups working on the DRC put forward dozens of policy recommendations. Hardly any are ever implemented. There are many different reasons for this: the unwieldy and unresponsive nature of bureaucracies, both in the region and in donor nations; entrenched interests; and apathy, especially on the part of donors.

So far, the instinctive response from many major donors has been to condemn the mutiny and reprimand Kigali. But such criticism of Rwanda is, on its own, not a solution and will only enhance the defiant rhetoric emanating from Kigali. While pressure on Rwanda must be increased—assuming that it continues to play a pivotal role in supporting the mutiny—it will only be effective if it is part of a larger peace plan that engages the Rwandan leadership.

The Congolese army cannot defeat the M23 with military might alone, both because its army is weak and because—even with international pressure—it will be difficult to ensure that Rwanda has cut support to the rebels. Sooner or later, a deal will have to be struck to reintegrate the rebellion, at least in part. Responsibility for solving the crisis in the east lies primarily in Kinshasa's hands and it is the Kabila government that will have to play a definitive role in shaping a meaningful political process. This must include short-term elements as well as solutions tailored to the root causes of the crisis, and should be designed to be achieved by careful phases.

The short term: Dealing with the M23

It is possible to sketch out the terms of compromise as a way out of this crisis; but more difficult to discern how to reach such an agreement.

What happens to the militia's worst offenders, including General Bosco Ntaganda, is crucial. If the decision is taken to arrest them, existing splits within the M23--with Ntaganda leading a clique that includes many of the worst human rights abusers--could become an asset. The majority

of the remaining senior officer corps should be reintegrated into FARDC and the national army, on the strict understanding that they will be redeployed outside the Kivus. These steps will not be possible without Rwandan support or the full acceptance by the DRC government that negotiations with the rebels are the only viable route to a settlement.

The government will have to treat with equal gravity threats by other armed groups—the consistent privileging of the ex-CNDP has stirred resentment among other communities. It is clear that Kinshasa, along with donors, will have to design a new demobilization and reintegration programme for these militia, although this will have to avoid the mistakes of the past, in particular by making sure any program does not provide incentives for re-mobilization.

It will be hard to persuade the leaderships in either Kinshasa or Kigali—the key actors in such a compromise—to implement these measures. In Kinshasa, where politicians have taken comfort in the focus on Rwandan interference, leaders will have to reverse their refusal to reintegrate M23 officers. At a personal level, President Kabila will have to prepare himself for recriminations if he strikes yet another deal with rebels in the Kivus.

Even achieving short-term results will require strong and sustained pressure on Kigali, including a reappraisal of existing and future donor funding. Donors have hard choices to make. They can no longer separate Rwanda's admirable successes in health care, education, telecommunications, and peacekeeping from its proven interference in the DRC. While ordinary Rwandans should not be hit by cuts to health or irrigation projects, neither should Congolese have to suffer a new rebellion.

The long term: Ending the cycle of rebellions

It would be a mistake, however, to limit solutions to the short-term. Conflict has been recurring in the eastern Congo for the past twenty years; without a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of conflict, further violence will be inevitable. In this regard, there are a number of urgent questions: How can Rwanda—and Rwanda's local clients in the eastern DRC—be persuaded that they do not need to support armed groups to protect their interests? And how can the

Congolese state overcome inertia and vested interests to reform its decrepit state apparatus? There are no ready-made answers to these questions, and countries in the region, along with donors, will have to find their own solutions. Three of the most crucial areas are institutional reform, regional economic integration and grievances at the grassroots:

- **Institutional reform.** Perhaps the most intractable quandary lies in the decrepit Congolese state. The weakness of the DRC's security sector, local administration, and judicial apparatus is a crucial enabler of conflict. The Congolese government needs a comprehensive strategy for security sector and administrative reform—with a focus on the east. There are no ready-made solutions, but the Congolese government should start with the blueprint laid out in its own constitution, including holding local elections and implementing effective decentralization.
- **Regional economic integration.** To prevent future escalations of violence, Kinshasa should consider economic reforms that will maximize incentives to maintain stability. These should include cross-border economic projects, such as the Ruzizi hydroelectric dam and methane gas production, as well as changes to existing labour laws and taxation policy to facilitate the cross-border movement of goods and persons. The Dodd-Frank legislation also provides a potential resource, as it can crack down on illicit minerals trade through market pressure, but its success will hinge on how well Kinshasa and donors implement it.[100]
- **Grassroots grievances.** There has been no true reconciliation or justice for the communities of the Kivus since the beginning of violence there in 1993—the resulting tensions and resentments continue to feed into the violence. There needs to be a

100 Article 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act, which was signed into law in July 2010, requires companies registerd in the United States who source minerals from the Great Lakes region to carry out due diligence on their supply chains.

coordinated effort—including both ways of sharing memories and promoting dialogue, as well as prosecutions or criminals—to heal these wounds. In addition, attention must be urgently paid to the crisis in the rural economy, in particular land conflicts, the abuses of local administration, and rampant unemployment.

A new political process

One of the most worrying aspects of the current impasse is the lack of a credible political process. In any such process, especially one that has to address such complex and challenging circumstances, the responsibility of the mediator weighs heavily.

Among the current candidates for this role, the UN has been politically marginalized since the Congolese transition ended in 2006, while the ICGLR, currently chaired by Uganda, will be hard pressed to get past charges of bias. When it comes to the reform of the Congolese state, there is also reason for scepticism: constitutional reforms have been delayed by years, and the donor-backed Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan (STAREC)—which addresses many of the issues of local governance raised here—has had little impact.

A joint UN/AU envoy, as suggested by a UN high-level meeting on the eastern DRC held in New York on 27 September 2012, might be able to provide the impetus needed to launch a new political process. Crucially, this envoy will need to tackle short and long-term issues together, as success in the former will depend on the perception that the latter are being addressed. The 23 March 2009 agreement, brokered under the auspices of UN/AU envoys Obasanjo and Mkapa, serves as a basis for involvement by both the UN and the AU. But such a solution will require an unprecedented convergence of external support with locally-led political initiatives. Without this, today's stop-gap measure will be tomorrow's failure.

Appendix 1:
Leadership of the *Synergie nationale pour la paix et la concorde*

General Laurent Nkunda, SNCP president in North Kivu (Tutsi)

Denis Ntare Semadwinga, former chief of staff to Governor Eugène Serufuli (Tutsi)

Déogratias Nzabirinda, a *chef de poste* from Masisi (Hutu)

Emmanuel Kamanzi, former RCD finance minister (Tutsi)

Xavier Chiribanya, governor and SNCP president in South Kivu (Shi)

Dieudonné Kabika, former advisor to RCD president Azarias Ruberwa (Rega)

Kambasu Ngeve, former governor of Beni under the RCD-K-ML rebellion (Nande)

Stanislas Kananura, former RCD administrator of Masisi (Tutsi)

Dr Guillaume Gasana, former RCD minister of health (Tutsi)

Moses Kambale, former officer in the Ugandan army and various Congolese rebellions (Nande)

Patient Mwendanga, former governor of Bukavu (Shi)

Appendix 2:
CNDP statistics

TROOP STRENGTH

CNDP (2006): 2,500–3,500

CNDP (2008): 5,276 (3,248 in Masisi, 1,838 in Rutshuru, and 190 in a special battalion)

MONTHLY SALARIES AND OPERATING COSTS

CNDP (2008): USD 3,000 (General Nkunda); USD 1,500 (General Ntaganda); USD 60 per staff officer; USD 250 per zone commander; USD 800 per axis commander (with staff officers); USD 200 for the Republican Guard; USD 140 (training wing); USD 60 (military hospital)

Note: These amounts are detailed in official CNDP documents. They do not include additional bonuses or profits from taxation rackets. These funds, however, were tightly centralized and individual officers did not receive much additional money.

CASUALTIES

Despite the lack of reliable figures, a confidential CNDP document seen by the Usalama Project lists 349 fatalities between August 2007 and January 2008 in Masisi alone. This included Lieutenant Colonel Claude Sematumo, a Munyamulenge, three majors, and 30 captains.

Appendix 3:
Structure of the CNDP in October 2008

COMMISSIONERS:

Chairman and Defence: Major General Laurent Nkunda Mihigo
Executive Secretary: Déogratias Nzabirinda Ntambara
Deputy Executive Secretary and Interior: Serge Kambasu Ngeve
Foreign Affairs: René Abandi
Communication: Bertrand Bisimwa
Justice and Human Rights: Jean-Désiré Mwiti Ngashani
Social Affairs: Dr Alexis Kasanzu
Finance: Major Castro Mbera

DEPUTY COMMISSIONERS:

Defence: Colonel Moses Kambale
Interior: Désiré Rwigema
Foreign Affairs: Benjamin Mbonimpa
Communication: Babou Amani
Justice and Human Rights: Mahamba Kasiwa
Social Affairs: Rwagasana Sengabo
Finance: Sankara Philo

Appendix 4:
Ethnic and clan divisions among Congolese Tutsi

Mugogwe, *Munyenduga*, and *Munyejomba*: Originally geographic labels, describing, respectively, people from the Bigogwe area of north-western Rwanda, southerners, and people from the Jomba area of eastern Rutshuru. These labels have acquired other connotations. The Bagogwe (plural of Mugogwe) are perceived to be poor and uneducated, often tagged as cow herds, while the Banyejomba, who come from a rich trading town, are seen as more affluent. And while the term Munyenduga refers to someone from southern and central Rwanda, in the DRC, it often refers to Tutsi who immigrated during the pogroms of the 1959–1963 period, many of whom came from these areas in Rwanda. In the divided CNDP, Gogwe officers gravitated to Ntaganda, while Nkunda—whose family came from Jomba—attracted Banyejomba.

Abega, *Abaha*, and *Abanyiginya*: Clan names, of which there are between 15 and 18 in Rwanda. Clan members can theoretically trace back their origins on the male line to the same ancestor, but in practice these labels constitute political groupings that cross ethnicities and regions.

Banyamulenge: Refers to Congolese Tutsi from South Kivu, whose ancestors immigrated in several waves to the High Plateau overlooking Lake Tanganyika from Rwanda and Burundi from the early nineteenth century or before. They played prominent roles in the RCD, but only a handful joined the CNDP and were often marginalized. Their highest-ranking officers there were Colonels Eric Bizimana, Eric Ruohimbere, and Elias Byinshi.

Appendix 5:
The CNDP split (with ethnic/clan affiliation)

PRO-NTAGANDA OFFICERS:

Colonel Baudouin Ngaruye (Gogwe, Masisi)
Colonel Innocent Zimurinda (Gogwe, Masisi)
Colonel Innocent Kabundi (Mwega, Masisi)
Colonel Séraphin Mirindi (Shi, Bukavu)
Colonel Innocent Kaina (Mufumbira, Uganda)
Lieutenant Colonel Richard Masozera (Gogwe, Ngungu)

PRO-NKUNDA OFFICERS:

Colonel Sultani Makenga (Munyejomba, Masisi)
Colonel Yusuf Mboneza (Gogwe, Masisi)
Colonel Claude Micho (Munyenduga, Goma)
Lieutenant Colonel Jean-Pierre Biyoyo (Shi, Bukavu)
Lieutenant Colonel Bahati Mulomba (Hutu, Masisi)
Lieutenant Colonel Salongo Ndekezi (Munyejomba, Jomba)
Lieutenant Colonel Richard Bisamaza (Munyejomba, Rutshuru)

Glossary of words and acronyms

AFDL	*Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaire* / Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire
ALEC	*Alliance pour la libération de l'est du Congo* / Alliance for the Liberation of Eastern Congo
ALiR	*Armée de libération du Rwanda* / Rwandan Liberation Army
AMP	*Alliance pour la majorité présidentielle*/Alliance for a Presidential Majority
brassage	assimilation of RCD and other armed group into the national army
chef de poste	senior provincial party functionary
CIRGL	*Conférence internationale sur la région des Grands Lacs* (see ICGLR)
COGAI	*Coalition des groupes armés de l'Ituri* / Coalition of Armed Groups in Ituri
combattants	fighters
CNDP	*Congrès national pour la défense du people* / National Congress for the Defence of the People
CNS	*Conférence nationale souveraine* / National Sovereign Conference
CONSUP	*Conseil supérieur de la paix* / Higher Peace Council
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
état major	general staff office
FAR	*Forces armées rwandaises* / Rwandan Armed Forces
FARDC	*Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo* / Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
FDC	*Forces de défense Congolaises* / Congolese Defence Forces
FDLR	*Forces démocratiques pour la libération de Rwanda* / Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda

FOLC	*Force Œcuménique pour la libération du Congo* / Ecumenical Force for the Liberation of the Congo
FRF	*Forces républicaines fédéralistes* / Federalist Republic Forces
groupement	Administrative sectors within territories
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (see CIRGL)
LDF	Local Defence Forces
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MAGRIVI	*Mutuelle agricole de Virunga* / Virunga Agricultural Collective
mixage	assimilation of CNDP and other armed group into the national army
MONUC	*Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République démocratique du Congo* / United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, (1999–2010)
MRPC	*Mouvement de résistance populaire au Congo* / Popular Resistance Movement in the Congo
mutuelles	ethnic-based communal self-help groups
NDC	Nduma Defence of Congo
notables	local dignitaries
PARECO	*Patriotes résistants congolais* / Alliance of Resistant Congolese Patriots
RCD	*Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* / Congolese Rally for Democracy
RCR	*Rassemblement Congolais pour le renouveau* / Congolese Rally for Renewal
RUD	*Ralliement pour l'unité et la démocratie* / Rally for Unity and Democracy
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SPC	*Synergie pour la paix et la concorde* / Synergy for Peace and Concord

TPD	*Tous pour la paix et le développement* / All for Peace and Development
UNHCR	UN Refugee Agency
UPCP	*Union des patriotes Congolais pour la paix* / Union of Congolese Patriots for Peace
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

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ARMED GROUPS IN THE DRC ARE LIKE THE CINYAU OF NANDE MYTHOLOGY—A MANY-HEADED MONSTER MUCH TALKED ABOUT BUT SELDOM SEEN. INFORMATION ABOUT THESE GROUPS HAS BEEN TOO SCATTERED TO INFORM POLICY. THE USALAMA PROJECT PROMISES TO REMEDY THIS: THEIR REPORTS ARE A VITAL RESOURCE FOR POLICY MAKERS AND PEACE BUILDERS, BOTH CONGOLESE AND NON-CONGOLESE.

— PASCAL KAMBALE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, AFRIMAP

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