



COUNTRY PROFILE: REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Nature of Conflict

The conflicts in the Republic of Congo (RoC) have been internal, political struggles that have played out along ethnic and regional lines.

Demobilization and Reintegration Activities to Date

National Three DDR interventions have been made to-date. The first, managed by the *Comité de Suivi* (January to December 2000), sought to determine the number of ex-combatants to be demobilized and to identify reintegration opportunities. The *Comité* has facilitated the reintegration of a number of former soldiers into the army. The second intervention (July 2000 to December 2002), was launched by UNDP and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to disarm and reintegrate ex-combatants through weapons collection, training and micro-projects. The third initiative, the Emergency Demobilization and Reintegration Program managed by the *Haut Commissariat pour le Démobilisation et Réinsertion des ex-Combatants* (HC) and funded by the World Bank, is ongoing. The program aims to support the economic and social reintegration of approximately 9,000 ex-combatants from three militia groups.

The number of ex-combatants who were reintegrated by the *Comité de Suivi* is not known. The UNDP/IOM project demobilized 8,000 ex-combatants. To date, close to 3,700 ex-combatants have been demobilized by the HC. A total of 12,000 have been registered of which 9,000 have been 'validated.' Registration continues.

A joint evaluation mission, consisting of the European Commission, UNDP and MDRP, took place in February/March 2003 to learn more about the results of the previous initiatives and to find ways for MDRP activities to build on these results rather than duplicate them. In March 2004, a mission of independent experts traveled to the RoC to verify the numbers of and criteria for ex-combatants. The independent experts found that a dedicated intervention for the collection of small arms and demobilization, particularly in the Pool region, is necessary. While a more rigorous review in light of strict eligibility criteria is needed, a future DDR program could benefit approximately 25,000 ex-combatants. Coordination mechanisms at the central and provincial levels, however, would need to be improved.

Cross-Border Approximately 4,000 ex-FAZ/ex-FAC from the DRC currently reside in the RoC with their families. The Governments of the RoC and the DRC, along with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), have agreed to work together toward the repatriation and reintegration of these groups. Bilateral contacts have been established between Rwandan and Congolese authorities with regard to the repatriation of about 1,000 Rwandan ex-combatants currently in the RoC.

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Major Peace Agreements / Cease-fire Agreements

<u>AGREEMENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>MAIN POINTS</u>	<u>SIGNATORIES</u>
Cessation of Hostilities in the Pool Region	March 2003	Uphold previous cessation of hostilities accords; disarmament and reintegration of Pool region ex-combatants	Government of the Republic of Congo; Conseil national de la résistance (CNR)
Cessation of Hostilities Accord (in French)	Nov and Dec 1999	<p>November: Cessation of conflict and halt to violence; amnesty to disarmed ex-combatants; aid to displaced populations; redeployment of the <i>Force Publique</i>; demobilization of armed groups; rehabilitation of public services; integration into the <i>Force Publique</i> of qualified individuals from the armed groups; reintegration of remaining forces into civil life; release of those detained due to the conflict; establishment of a <i>Comité de Suivi</i>; collection of illegal arms</p> <p>December: the above plus – reorganization of the <i>Force Publique</i>; establishment of a National Commission for the Reorganization of the <i>Force Publique</i>;</p>	<p>November: Armed Forces of RoC; Cobras; <i>Mouvement National de Libération du Congo</i> (MNLIC) ; <i>Mouvement National de Libération du Congo-Rénové</i> (MNLICR) ; Bana Dol; <i>Résistance Sud Sud</i> ; Ninjas</p> <p>December : Armed Forces of RoC; <i>Haut Commandement de la Force d'Autodéfense de la Résistance</i> (FADR) ; <i>Conseil National de la Résistance</i> (CNR)</p>

Links with other conflicts in the region

<u>Country</u>	<u>Involvement</u>
Angola	President Jose Eduardo dos Santos of Angola provided military support to Sassou Nguesso during the 1997 and 1998/99 conflicts.
Dem. Rep. of Congo	Following the conflict to oust Joseph Mobutu Seso Seko (1996-1997) and at the beginning of the conflict to oust Laurent Désiré Kabila (1998-2001), former members of the <i>Forces Armées Zairoises</i> and the <i>Forces Armées Congolaises</i> fled into neighboring Republic of Congo, where approximately 4,000 still remain. Their presence continues to be a source of tension between the two governments.

Internally Displaced and Refugees

Internally Displaced	As of September 2003, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity and Humanitarian Action estimates the number of IDPs as approximately 100,000. This number is expected to increase as the population has fled into the forest and is returning to their villages, only to find that their homes have been destroyed and their crops devastated (OCHA).
Refugees in Congo	Approximately 110,000 refugees from the region (mainly from the DRC, CAR, Rwanda and Angola) are residing in the RoC (OCHA, Jan. 2003)