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COI QUERY RESPONSE

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO - INFORMATION ON THE SECURITY SITUATION

In September 2024 *Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS)* reported that: “Damaged roads and insecurity caused by armed conflict constrain access to medical supplies, including mpox vaccines that must be transported under special conditions, at low temperatures, across the vast country (BBC 12/09/2024). Armed conflict and violence, particularly in eastern regions, make it dangerous for aid workers to operate, often forcing the suspension or limitation of activities. As a result, essential services – such as medical care – are disrupted, leaving populations without critical assistance. In July 2024, a humanitarian convoy was ambushed in Butembo, North Kivu, resulting in the death of two relief workers. Since the start of the year, there have been over 170 security incidents directly targeting humanitarian personnel, leading to at least four fatalities and 20 injuries. Over a dozen humanitarian workers were kidnapped in the first half of 2024 (UN News 02/07/2024; Insecurity Insight/SHCC 29/07/2024; Govt. US 09/07/2024).”¹

The *African News* in September 2024 mentioned that: “The security situation is precarious, marked by recurrent clashes, massacres of civilians and massive population displacements.”²

The *UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* in September 2024 points out that: “The security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, marked by widespread violence gave rise to

¹ Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS) (20 September 2024) Democratic Republic of Congo: Monkeypox outbreak

² African News (20 September 2024) Eastern DRC: Army allies, MONUSCO protect civilians amidst precarious security situation

numerous human rights violations and abuses. Between January and July 2024, the UNJHRO documented 2,278 human rights violations and abuses in the provinces affected by the conflict.”³

In August 2024 *The Conversation* mentioned that: “Security forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have been battling the M23 rebel group in the east of the country since 2012. However, there has been a major upsurge in fighting so far this year. The M23 has seized significant swathes of territory, pushing deeper into North Kivu province. It now controls at least 100 towns and villages and fighting has intensified around the provincial capital, Goma, which is already home to around 700,000 displaced people.”⁴

The *International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) / World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)* in August 2024 points out that: “Conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is common, particularly in camps for displaced persons in the east of the country. In February 2024, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in DRC reported that there were almost 7.1 million internally displaced people in the country, mainly in the three eastern regions, making it one of the biggest internal displacement crises in the world. Amid this security chaos, the Congolese authorities have called for an accelerated withdrawal of MONUSCO troops by the end of 2024, while SADC troops are gradually being deployed in North Kivu alongside the FARDC to combat the M23 in particular.”⁵ This report further mentioned that: “...in certain regions of the country, particularly in the east, the widespread climate of insecurity exacerbates the difficulties for journalists trying to cover the conflicts and human rights violations.”⁶

The *UK Foreign Office* in August 2024 notes that: “Fighting near Sake, to the West of Goma has intensified in 2024. The situation in Goma remains uncertain, unstable and can change quickly.”⁷

The *Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC)* in August 2024 reported that: “In the midst of a worsening security crisis, civilians in eastern Congo continue to be relentlessly targeted with violence by non-state armed groups, national security forces, and their partners.”⁸

In June 2024 the *United Nations* states that: “During the reporting period, MONUSCO recorded 334 security incidents in Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu. In total, 562 civilians were killed, including 141 women and 38 children, while 194 civilians sustained injuries, including 17 women and 22 children. The security situation remained extremely volatile, in particular in North Kivu and Ituri, where the main perpetrators of violence against civilians were still the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) (340 civilians killed in North Kivu and Ituri combined) and CODECO (106 civilians killed in Ituri). The reporting

³ UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (3 September 2024) Analysis of the human rights situation in DRC - July 2024 Infographics

⁴ The Conversation (30 August 2024) DRC: fighting with rebels in the country's east has intensified, sparking fears of a wider war

⁵ International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) / World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) (27 August 2024) Human Rights Defenders on the Front Line: Shrinking space for civil society and frustrated hopes for the protection of defenders in the Democratic Republic of Congo

⁶ *ibid*, p.12

⁷ UK Foreign Office (8 August 2024) Democratic Republic of the Congo travel advice (August 2024)

⁸ Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) (11 August 2024) Civilian Perspectives on Regional Security Efforts to Address Violence in the DRC

period also saw the recurrence of ADF attacks near the town of Beni and further to the south-west towards Cantine, North Kivu Province.”⁹

The *European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA)* in June 2024 points out that: “Between 1 January 2023 and 17 May 2024, the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) documented 17 violent incidents in the Kasai Central province, two of which were coded as battles, 14 as riots, and one as violence against civilians. ACLED recorded 44 fatalities since 1 January 2023 related to the security situation. Examples of security incidents in the Kasai Central region during the reference period, include:

- On 5 May 2024, the 'Songyie Bambembele' and 'Bena Kasasa' communal militias clashed in Lubi in Kasai-Central, over a territorial boundary conflict, in which at least 30 people were killed.”¹⁰

The *International Crisis Group* in June 2024 notes that: “Security and humanitarian situation worsened in east after deadly bombing of displacement camp as rebels took more territory; security forces thwarted apparent coup attempt.”¹¹

The *US Department of State* Country Reports on Human Rights Practices in April 2024 states that: “Humanitarian access was difficult in some locations, due to weak civilian authority, insecurity, and poor infrastructure.”¹²

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⁹ United Nations (20 June 2024) United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Report of the Secretary-General (June 2024)

¹⁰ European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) (3 June 2024) EUAA COI Query - Democratic Republic of the Congo: Security situation in Kasai Central region

¹¹ International Crisis Group (3 June 2024) CrisisWatch May 2024 - DRC (Security and humanitarian situation worsened in east)

¹² US Department of State (22 April 2024) 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Democratic Republic of the Congo

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