

THE AGREEMENT ON A CEASE-FIRE IN THE  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO:

**An Analysis of the Agreement and Prospects for Peace**

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## **THE AGREEMENT ON A CEASE-FIRE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO:**

### **An Analysis of the Agreement and Prospects for Peace**

#### **Executive Summary**

After a year of failed attempts by Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Organisation for African Unity (OAU), South Africa and other regional powerbrokers, the six countries involved in Africa's seven-nation war in the Democratic Republic of Congo signed the Agreement for a Cease-fire in the DRC in Lusaka on 10 July 1999. The war has pitched Kabila and his allies, Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia against a Congolese rebellion backed by Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi since August 1998. The main provisions of the agreement include: immediate cessation of hostilities; the establishment of a Joint Military Commission (JMC), composed of the belligerent parties to investigate cease-fire violations, to work out mechanisms to disarm the identified militias, and monitor the withdrawal of foreign troops according to an established calendar; the deployment of a UN chapter 7 force tasked with disarming the armed groups, collecting weapons from civilians and providing humanitarian assistance and protection to the displaced persons and refugees; and the initiating of a Congolese National Dialogue intended to lead to a "new political dispensation in the DRC".

However, a month after signing, the war continues. While it does not dispute the content of the document, the main rebel group, the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) has refused to sign the agreement. The RCD split earlier in May, when Ernest Wamba dia Wamba was ousted as head of the group, but refused to step down and established his headquarters in Kisangani with Ugandan backing. Both the RCD-Goma, backed by Rwanda, and the RCD-Kisangani, supported by Uganda, have demanded the exclusive right to sign the peace agreement. This has delayed the implementation of the agreement and encouraged factions to engage in strategies to buy time. Since the signing, more troops have been deployed and the rebels and their allies have continued to make territorial advances. Many claims and counterclaims of violations of the agreement have already been made, making the commitment by both parties to the cease-fire agreement more and more suspect.

Relations between Rwanda and Uganda have grown increasingly strained since the RCD split. Soldiers from both countries have been stationed at the airport and control separate parts of the city of Kisangani. Despite recent efforts by South Africa and Zambia to verify leadership claims and to put pressure on both factions to sign, the disagreement degenerated into open urban warfare between the two armies on 14 August. The former allies fought for the control of several installations as well as of the city international airport, employing heavy artillery. On 17 August, Rwanda and Uganda agreed on a cease-fire. They say they will send a military team to find out

why the fighting erupted. They also agree that they will respect the outcome of the investigation on leadership claims within the RCD undertaken by the South Africans and the Zambians. If the investigation committee doesn't come up with a clear result, both will recommend that the 28 founders of RCD should sign the agreement.

The Lusaka agreement, however, meets the demands of the rebels and their supporters, and more specifically of the Rwandans by recognising their pledge to disarm the Interahamwe and ex-FAR in the Great Lakes region. But the current fighting between Uganda and Rwanda in Kisangani makes quite clear that the security interests of those countries, which their intervention in the DRC was supposed to protect, are not the only motivation for the war. There are neither Rwandan nor Ugandan rebel groups in Kisangani that could justify the presence of the two countries armies. Instead, the conflict seems to be a battle for commercial influence to control diamond, gold and coffee concessions, and for political influence in the region after the war is over.

The fighting between Uganda and Rwanda also legitimises Kabila's claim that those countries are aggressors, an argument the Congolese leader seized upon when he called on the Security Council to strongly condemn the violations of the cease-fire and to demand the "immediate departure" of forces from Uganda and Rwanda. His Justice Minister Mwenze Kongolo even said at the SADC meeting in Maputo that: "as far as we are concerned the Lusaka protocol is dead".

Key questions remain unanswered. Is peace in sight at last or is the stage set for the war to continue? Can the Lusaka cease-fire agreement be resurrected in light of the glaring cease-fire violations by both sides in the conflict? Can the pressure that was put on all the parties to sign the agreement be sustained?

The high level of tension between Uganda and Rwanda is likely to affect the geopolitical order of the region; it could lead to further fragmentation and a *de facto* partition of the DRC, with each army occupying a sector and a very volatile military situation. If Ugandan troops remain in the North, Rwanda could be tempted to concentrate its efforts on Mbuji-Mayi. It could also convince Uganda to give up and withdraw, leaving Rwanda alone facing accusations of aggression. Parliament members in Uganda have already announced its intentions to move a motion seeking the complete withdrawal of the troops from the DRC. And last, but not least, anti-Rwanda feelings are already growing in the Ugandan army, even though government officials in both countries have played down the impact of the Kisangani clash on the broad alliance of Uganda and Rwanda. The Ugandans have lost a lot of soldiers in the battle and some of their strongholds have been taken by the Rwandans, which is perceived as a humiliation by the UDPF.

Since the beginning of the war, the fragility of the Congolese state has been exploited by all foreign forces, whether allies or enemies of the Kabila government. For the first time, with the Lusaka agreement, the Congolese domestic agenda was brought back to the centre stage. If the cease-fire agreement is not implemented, the continuation of violence could postpone the National Dialogue, which is key to the deployment of a peacekeeping force, the withdrawal of foreign troops, the formation of a new Congolese army and the re-establishment of state administration on DRC territory. As long as the military situation remains unresolved, it is unlikely that the Congolese will be in charge of their own fate.

This report analyses the motivations of each of the main parties to the conflict to sign the Lusaka agreement. It also looks at the difficulties that lie ahead if the agreement is to be implemented.

Each belligerent party took the opportunity to put his own domestic concerns on record, especially by demanding that rebel groups fighting their governments be disarmed, and also by securing a regional commitment to address their national security interests. One of the main precedents created by the agreement is that the belligerent parties are, through the JMC, turned into the enforcers of the agreement. The JMC is supposed to share intelligence regarding militias and work out mechanisms to disarm them. However, it will take time for the parties to overcome their suspicions and do more than make sure that their enemies don't continue supporting the rebels. Furthermore, it will be difficult for Kabila and Zimbabwe to turn against and disarm their allies, the ex-FAR and Interahamwe. Intelligence reports have already indicated that some armed groups have started going underground.

The DRC conflict has three dimensions: local, national and regional. For peace to return to the DRC, the peace process should comprehensively deal with the conflict at all three levels. For the international community, this is a unique opportunity to re-engage with the region, to demonstrate commitment to African peace processes, and to rebuild credibility with national partners in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa. In particular, the international community should support regional efforts to restore the territorial integrity of the DRC and to resolve its security issues. Given the failure to prevent the Rwandan genocide in 1994 and to address the long term security issues it created, ICG recommends that the UN Security Council, its members, and the OAU seize the opportunity to:

### **At the Regional Security Level**

#### **1. Put continuous pressure on all rebel factions to sign the Lusaka cease-fire agreement and on all parties to respect it**

US, Security Council and regional diplomatic pressure should be directed towards Uganda and Rwanda to respect the Kisangani cease-fire; to respect their commitment to the Lusaka cease-fire; and to take a common stand on the issue of the RCD signature, so that the Congolese may start their National Debate process. Although the rebel leaders have developed their own individual and group interests, Rwanda and Uganda can still prevail on them.

#### **2. Support the Joint Military Commission (JMC)**

The Security Council Member states should undertake a serious examination of the needs of the JMC, and support those needs fully.

#### **3. Strengthen the mandate of the OAU-appointed chairman of the Joint Military Commission**

Understanding that the JMC is composed of representatives of the belligerent parties and has no accountability nor supervision mechanism by any neutral body, ICG recommends that the OAU should play a more active role as arbitrator of the agreement and carry out that role until the UN PK force is able to provide accountability and supervision, as mandated in the agreement.

**4. Mobilise international and regional efforts for a proactive non-military response to the Ex-FAR and Interahamwe problem by:**

- Putting pressure on the Kabila and Zimbabwe governments to demobilise Interahamwe and ex-FAR as a gesture of good will in the regional peace process;
- Encouraging the neighbouring countries of the DRC to make a special effort to arrest the leaders of those groups responsible for the genocide and whose names are on the list of the International Tribunal in Arusha;
- Supporting a demobilisation and re-integration plan for the Interahamwe and ex-FAR, who are estimated to count between 30,000 and 45,000 members. This recommendation is based on the experience of successful re-integration of Interahamwe and ex-FAR (since February 1999) into Rwandan society.

**5. The governments of the region should be strongly encouraged to practice inclusive politics and offer reintegration alternatives to their respective rebellions**

**6. Support a peace-keeping force in the DRC with a realistic and concrete mandate**

The terms set by the Lusaka agreement ask for a chapter 7 force that will have the mandate to, among other things: “track down all armed groups in the DRC.” A chapter 7 force would require at least 100 000 soldiers to monitor the situation from the Sudanese to the Zambian borders and from the Congo-Brazzaville to the Tanzanian borders. In the event the Security Council doesn't authorise a chapter 7 force, support should be given to the JMC to carry out that mandate and more UN/OAU observers should be sent. In a second stage, a chapter 6 force should be authorised by the Security Council as a confidence building mechanism and sign that the international community has an interest in the DRC; as an observer of the implementation of the agreement; as an investigator of the violations of the cease-fire and protector of civilian populations; as a catalytic mechanism to help the population distance itself from the fighters; and as a provider of humanitarian assistance.

**At the National Level**

**1. Support the Congolese National Dialogue and Reconciliation Debate by:**

- Giving expert technical support to the Facilitator chosen by SADC;
- Encouraging the Facilitator to include Congolese armed groups that were not represented in Lusaka. These are the Mai – Mai, the Banyamulenge and the former Mobutu soldiers, and to make sure no potential disrupters are excluded;
- Enforcing the provisions in the agreement stating that all participants should have an equal status;
- Monitoring the proceedings of the debate and ensuring that they are free of manipulation and intimidation.

### **At the Local Level**

- 1. Create a donor liaison group to mobilise resources for humanitarian assistance, local reconstruction, rehabilitation of infrastructures and reconciliation initiatives at the community level**



## **THE AGREEMENT ON A CEASE-FIRE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO:**

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#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

After one year of failed attempts by SADC and other powerbrokers to reach a settlement on the DRC conflict, the belligerents signed an agreement for a cease-fire in Lusaka on 10 July 1999. This war is the second taking place on DRC territory in two years and pits the allies of the first war against each other: rebels backed by Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi have been seeking to overthrow Kabila through the military option, while Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia intervened on behalf of SADC to protect DRC's sovereignty and Kabila's government. For the first time, the separate disputes being waged on DRC territory as well as the Congolese agenda were addressed in the Lusaka agreement. However, the commitment of the parties to the agreement remains suspect and violence can not be ruled out.

This report has been written on the basis of many interviews with all belligerents during the Lusaka negotiations in July, and analyses the chances for peace contained in the agreement as well as its loopholes. The main components of the documents are:

- **Creation of a Joint Military Commission composed by the Belligerents and Creation of an OAU/UN Observer Group**

A Joint Military Commission (JMC), composed of two representatives from each party to the conflict under a neutral chairman to be appointed by the OAU is to be established. Signatories to the conflict have already nominated representatives to the Commission. The duties of the JMC and of the OAU/UN Observer Group are among other things to investigate cease-fire violations, working out mechanisms to disarm militias and monitoring the withdrawal of foreign troops. Both the JMC and the Observer Groups are supposed to start executing peacekeeping operations until the deployment of the UN peacekeeping force<sup>1</sup>. The Security Council authorised the deployment of 90 military observers on 6 August 1999.<sup>2</sup>

- **Deployment of a Peacekeeping Force**

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<sup>1</sup> Agreement for a cease-fire in the DRC, Art 3./11.b/ Annex A, Chapter 7.

<sup>2</sup> Security Council resolution 1258, 6 August 1999.



The UN is requested to deploy an appropriate chapter 7 force to ensure implementation of the accord. The role of the force will be to disarm the militias identified in the agreement, collect weapons from civilians, supervise the withdrawal of all other foreign troops, and provide humanitarian assistance to displaced persons and refugees<sup>3</sup>.

- **Disarmament of Militia Groups**

The agreement envisages the tracking down and disarming of armed groups. The screening of mass-killers and war criminals and handing them over to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania<sup>4</sup>.

- **Congolese National Dialogue and Reconciliation Debate**

45 days after the signing of the cease-fire agreement, the DRC government, the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD), the Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC), unarmed opposition groups and the Congolese civil society are supposed to begin open political negotiations that should result in a new political dispensation in the DRC. All parties will have equal status in the debate. The negotiations will be held under the authority of a neutral facilitator. Topics to be tackled in the debate are democratic elections, the formation of the national army and the re-establishment of state administration throughout the DRC<sup>5</sup>.

## II. MOTIVATIONS AND STRATEGIES OF THE PLAYERS: WHY SIGN NOW?

### 1. A Step Towards Peace

#### (i) External Pressures and a New Realism

External pressures played a key role in the signing of the cease-fire agreement for both sides. Tanzania and South Africa, in particular, were instrumental in securing the rebels' allies signatures on the agreement. However, the rivalry between Emile Ilunga and Professor Wamba dia Wamba for RCD leadership prevented the rebels from signing. From 3-9 June, 1999, Tanzania tried to mediate these leadership wrangles between RCD Goma and RCD Kisangani factions, and the MLC in Kabale, Uganda, the objective being to agree on a common negotiating position in the Lusaka talks. The participants suggested that two committees be set up to deal with the leadership issue and define a negotiating strategy, but the committees never met. At the last minute, RCD Goma and the Rwanda delegation decided to go to South Africa to attend President Mbeki's inauguration and did not show up in Kabale. These failed attempts explain why the different rebel factions have not reached a consensus about their representation in the Lusaka peace process.

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<sup>3</sup> Agreement for a Ceasefire in the DRC, Art 3.11.a.

<sup>4</sup> Annex A, Chapter 8.

<sup>5</sup> Agreement for a Ceasefire in the DRC, Art 3.19/ Annex A, Chapter 5.

South Africa has also been putting intense pressure on the rebels and their allies to end the war. Since the beginning of the conflict in the DRC, former President Mandela has played an active role. He succeeded in pressuring Rwanda to admit the presence of its troops in the DRC. As soon as Thabo Mbeki took over, he presented a peace plan that suggested, among other things, a formula that would turn the warring parties into peacekeepers and allow an immediate start to the Congolese National Dialogue and Reconciliation Debate.

South Africa and Tanzania are now driving the diplomatic efforts to persuade the RCD to sign the Lusaka agreement. In a joint press conference with Kabila in Pretoria on 29 July 1999, President Thabo Mbeki called on the rebels to sign the cease-fire agreement. As part of his diplomatic initiative to end the conflict in the DRC, he also hosted a meeting on 8 August 1999, with the Presidents of Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania, and appointed his Foreign Minister Zuma Nkosazana to work with the Zambian Minister of State, Eric Silwamba, to verify leadership claims within the RCD. Mbeki's aim is to establish the true power base of the RCD movement, thus expediting the signing of the agreement.

Pressure is also being applied to the rebels to sign the agreement by the United States who are "strongly but quietly supportive"<sup>6</sup> of a regional solution to the conflict. Although the United States has not taken a lead role in the negotiations, they have been actively engaged behind the scenes. They have been urging Rwanda and Uganda to use their influence over the rebels to make them sign. Uganda subsequently secured the signature of Jean-Pierre Bemba, leader of the MLC, but is still demanding that Wamba signs either for the entire RCD, or at least for RCD-Kisangani. Rwanda has not yet prevailed on RCD Goma to sign the agreement. The Security Council also expressed "deep concerns that the RCD has not signed the agreement and calls upon the latter to sign without delay"<sup>7</sup>.

Aldo Ajello, EU Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region, on 10 August 1999, announced that the EU would pressure the rebels to sign the agreement and called on the rebels to differentiate between leadership wrangles and the continuation of the war. Ajello praised the Kabila Government for its courage in signing the agreement, and committed EU support to the National Dialogue. He also indicated the willingness of La Francophonie and Community of Sant' Egidio to facilitate the National Dialogue.

Also using indirect tactics, and in a significant and symbolic show of support to the process, the EU gave US \$3 million in July 1999 to the mediator in the DRC conflict, President Fredrick Chiluba of Zambia. The funds are to facilitate meetings related to the peace process.

The support given to the cease-fire agreement by the international community, especially by the United States, is based on the need to reconstruct the regional power systems and solidarity that have been shattered by the current DRC war. The impact of the war on commerce, economic stability and growth in the region has been profound and has delayed regional economic integration and democratisation processes.

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<sup>6</sup> "US Lays Down Conditions for Military Action in Africa", Kevin J Kelley, *The East African*, 9-15 August 1999.

<sup>7</sup> Security Council resolution 1258, 6 August 1999.

On both sides of the conflict, Uganda and Zimbabwe are playing leading political and military roles. The international community realises that engaging Mugabe and Museveni and rebuilding a Uganda-Zimbabwe axis offers the best hopes of implementing the cease-fire agreement.

**(ii) Identifying the Problem by Recording the Parties Demands**

A major consideration in stitching together the cease-fire agreement was to break down, record and represent the requirements of the various belligerents should they stop fighting. Each belligerent seized the opportunity that the agreement gave them to include domestic concerns, especially in identifying the rebel groups fighting their governments, and demanding that they be disarmed: Interahamwe and ex-FAR for Rwanda; FDD for Burundi<sup>8</sup>; ADF, LRA, West Nile Bank Front, UNRFII, NALU for Uganda and UNITA for Angola. Through the agreement, the belligerent governments are securing a regional commitment to deal with their national security interests.

Therefore the provisions spelled out in the agreement can be interpreted differently by each signatory. Each party to the agreement has different priorities. For the Kabila government, the agreement should secure its legitimacy and re-establish state authority over DRC territory. For Zimbabwe, the agreement emphasises the DRC's sovereignty, legitimising therefore their intervention and ensuring Zimbabwe a lead role in the solution to the DRC conflict. Angola's inclusion of UNITA on the list of groups to be disarmed gives the Angolan government the opportunity to shop for diplomatic support against UNITA, ensure that whoever succeeds Kabila is not sympathetic to UNITA, and secure a commitment to closing down UNITA supply routes through Congo. For Rwanda, the agreement recognises for the first time the security threat posed by the Interahamwe and ex-FAR and calls for a regional response. For Uganda, the agreement weakens Kabila by calling for a National Dialogue, rebuilds regional solidarity under Ugandan political and economic leadership, and places Museveni in a position of unrivalled power in East and Central Africa. By making the Congolese rebels signatories, the agreement brings them international recognition and weakens Kabila.

This range of different interpretations and expectations could lead to delays and disruptions in the implementation of the agreement.

**(iii) The Impact of the Agreement on Political Participation at the National Level in DRC**

Until now, the war in Congo has offered little choice to the DRC population. The war has only involved two parties, the rebels and the Government, leaving no room for unarmed actors, a significant and diverse set of players, to have any input in the future of their country. The agreement forces two radical departures from the binary power play of the last eleven months and provides a process for their participation in determining the future of their country through the National Dialogue initiative. It also provides a framework for tackling other critical domestic political and military issues: the re-establishment of state administration throughout the DRC, ensuring state provision of healthcare and education,

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<sup>8</sup> Although Burundi was not identified as a belligerent party and attended the Lusaka talks as an observer.

guaranteeing freedom of movement within the country; and the formation of a national army and the disarming of civil populations.

The population of Eastern Congo wants peace more than ever and feels that it is critical that the Lusaka agreement be signed by all factions. A strong consensus has developed among the Congolese since 1996 that all foreign forces should leave their country. Following the signing of the agreement, a number of important developments have been observed at the community level: there seems to be a deterioration of the relationship between elements of civil society in South Kivu and the Interahamwe, and consequently the Mai-Mai who are associated with them. These militias are now seen as predatory forces that bring hardships on local populations, take away the power of traditional leaders and aggravate the dramatic social and economic situation. Though anti-Tutsi feelings remain very strong in South Kivu, civil society representatives express as much frustration with the Interahamwe as they used to express about the RPA. In North Kivu, though it seems that some Mai-Mai groups have reached military understanding with the Interahamwe and the FDD, there have been efforts to encourage other Mai-Mai groups to return to civilian life. The presence of international observers would certainly support community leaders committed to peaceful cohabitation and encourage their efforts to distance themselves from armed groups.

#### **(iv) The Region Sets the Terms of International Involvement**

The Lusaka document creates a precedent by setting the terms for the involvement of the international community in the Congo peace plan. The region asks the Security Council to approve an “appropriate”<sup>9</sup> chapter 7 force and clearly spells out a calendar for the implementation of the cease-fire agreement. Until the UN Peacekeeping force is deployed, the JMC, composed of representatives of the belligerents, is supposed to carry out peacekeeping operations. Even the mandate of the UN Peacekeeping force is defined by the region. From the outset, the region has taken a leadership role on the operations and claims ownership of the agreement “both on content and form”.<sup>10</sup> The essence of the request is for the UN to give the regional powers a mandate of peace-enforcement, and to let them carry it out without interference.

The UN faces a dilemma. On the one hand, it is very unlikely that the Security Council will approve a chapter 7 force, which requires the UN to find and send troops, and to take the political risk that those troops will be shot at. On the other hand, the demand highlights the failure of the international community to disarm and arrest the perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide while they were in refugee camps, and creates a moral obligation on the UN to act. It remains to be seen whether the UN will agree to subcontract and legitimise the belligerents to act as peacekeepers.

## **2. Who Wins What?**

All the parties had initial objectives when they entered the war but also developed new ones once fighting on DRC territory. The war economy that has developed in the Democratic Republic of Congo has created a set of powerful individuals and networks

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<sup>9</sup> Art.3/11.a of the agreement.

<sup>10</sup> President Chiluba’s words at the signing ceremony on 10 July 1999 in Lusaka.

that transcend state actors. More and more people have an interest in the continuation of the war. There is no guarantee that an agreement among the major belligerents will affect those sets of interests.

**(i) Kabila and his Allies – a Weakening Coalition**

The envisaged cease-fire agreement would leave Kabila's hold on power much diminished. With rebels in control of nearly all the mineral fields in the east and Zimbabwe's hold on the diamond centre of Mbuji-Mayi hotly contested by Rwanda, Kabila lacks the capacity to wage war without external support. However, although it is clear that Kabila will be weakened by the cease-fire agreement, he may well manipulate it and the National Dialogue process to his advantage. If the progress of the peace process is stalled after it is signed and before the National Dialogue begins, he will have time to employ the tactics he has used so successfully in the past. In 1996, as he began his push for power, Kabila dismissed all calls for a national conference to comprehensively involve the forces opposed to Mobutu, and instead declared himself president.

**(a) Kabila - Negotiating for his own political survival**

The Congolese rebellion supported by Uganda and Rwanda that broke out last year has been both a blessing and a curse to President Kabila's career as a politician. Immediately, Kabila successfully mobilised the Congolese population in his favour by branding the war as a product of foreign aggression. He played upon national fears, isolated the ethnic element of the conflict, and called on the population to pick up spears, machetes and guns to fight the Tutsi invaders. With this combination of offensive and defensive measures, he gained significant domestic support for his actions.

Kabila has also performed well on a regional and international level. Almost immediately, Kabila called on Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia for support, and their response effectively blocked the rebels from taking over Kinshasa. He has built on this military alliance to attain diplomatic recognition and support from the Southern Africa region. On the international level, Kabila has been able to attract attention to his situation by getting audiences with prominent personalities such as the Pope, President Chirac of France and the King of Belgium.

Having successfully stopped the rebels from taking over Kinshasa, President Kabila can now claim to have forced the rebels and their backers to the negotiation table in Lusaka. The Lusaka agreement recognises the territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and recognises Kabila as head of state.

The main reason why Kabila has been forced to negotiate is because of the weakening commitment of his allies to continue the war, and the growing military pressure on his regime. Despite claims of victories, he has not recovered any of the territory taken by the rebels and their allies since the beginning of the war. The option of a comprehensive military victory over the rebels has become elusive. The rebels continue to advance, taking strategically important locations such as Gbadolite and Zongo. Kabila's hold over the north east of the country

continues to deteriorate, despite the signing of the agreement. The rebel forces are operating around Mbandaka on the Congo river only about 500 km from Kinshasa, and near Bandundu about 300 km to the east. The two thrusts make a future rebel offensive on Kinshasa possible. By signing the agreement, Kabila sought to ensure that at least he would not be removed from power as a result of a crushing military defeat at the hands of the rebels. On 26 July he went to South Africa to ask President Mbeki to put pressure on Rwanda and Uganda in the hope of forcing the rebels to sign the cease-fire deal.<sup>11</sup> This represented a major shift in his approach; since the beginning of the war he had accused South Africa of supporting the rebels.

The divisions within rebel ranks were another motivation for Kabila to enter negotiations. If he was to organise elections, as he claimed was his intention in Lusaka, the rebels and their backers exposed as a bunch of opportunists without a genuine program for the Congolese people would certainly lose. In Lusaka, Kabila had the opportunity to play statesman and sign the agreement, leaving the rebels to bicker over internal leadership dynamics.

The suspension of international aid to DRC since the start of the war might also play a role in Kabila's calculation. Major donors have conditioned the resumption of aid-related talks with Kinshasa on a negotiated settlement to the conflict. By working for a negotiated settlement he signals his willingness to comply with the donors, and increases the chance of jumpstarting the stalled aid process. On a macro-economic level, Kabila wants to use the cease-fire agreement as a confidence building measure for investors. This is particularly relevant in the mining sector, where investors have been refusing to sign mining concessions with such an uncertain outcome to the war pending.

#### **(b) Zimbabwe - The cease-fire agreement as an exit strategy**

Zimbabwe needs to get out of the DRC for many different reasons and its withdrawal will change the balance of forces dramatically. However, a SADC Allied Task Force Commander told journalists on 10 August, that the departure of the troops by the end of the year was now doubtful because of the failure of the rebels to sign the cease-fire agreement. "The cease-fire is putting itself into effect but the problem is that it is one-sided. The rebels and their allies are taking advantage of the cease-fire to gain ground."<sup>12</sup> The commander said the cease-fire had been violated 70 times in the last month.

Zimbabwe's interest is to prevent the rebels and their backers from taking over Kinshasa and maintaining control over the territory that they have already secured in the DRC, especially diamond-rich Mbuji-Mayi. Mineral concessions currently held by Zimbabwe are secure under the terms of the cease-fire deal, which also allows for a small contingent of Zimbabwean troops to remain behind and participate in peacekeeping operations.

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<sup>11</sup> "Tottering Kabila begs for help", Howard Barrell, Mail and Guardian, 30 July 1999.

<sup>12</sup> "Zimbabwe troops in DC unlikely to be home for Christmas", Charles Mtewa, the Herald, 9 August 1999.

There has been mounting domestic opposition to Zimbabwe's involvement in the DRC, and as a result, Zimbabwe has been looking for ways to pull out of a distant and increasingly unprofitable war. Zimbabwe needs to secure financial compensation against their investment in the war, which runs to an estimated US \$3 million monthly.<sup>13</sup> The IMF has also put conditions for the release of funds and balance of payment support for the country. Among other things, IMF requested that the cabinet makes the undertakings and expenditures public. A workable peace pact gives President Mugabe of Zimbabwe the opportunity to pull his 10,000 troops out of an unpopular war that his cash-strapped country can ill afford. "I think he has been desperate for a way to bring his troops home for sometime now because of the costs involved"<sup>14</sup>. In the course of the war Zimbabwe has lost two war planes and several tanks. The official fatality figure stands at 20 soldiers but independent sources put the figure closer to 120.

Zimbabwe defence industries are supplying the DRC army and need to be assured that any future government in the DRC will continue to work with them. They want to avoid the Mozambique scenario where, after supporting Frelimo with troops and equipment, they were outcompeted by South African capital.

Zimbabwe has also realised that a military victory over the rebels and their allies is impossible in the short run. Zimbabwe's only successful military involvement in the DRC has been to stop the rebels from taking Kinshasa, and only then with the combined force of the Angolan, Namibian and Kabila government forces, and to manage to keep Mbuji-Mayi. Mugabe's announcement of an operation intended to push the rebels from their eastern bases has not materialised.

Rwanda's allegations that Zimbabwe has been training and re-arming the Interahamwe militia have also been very damaging. During the 1996-97 war that brought Kabila to power, Zimbabwe supported Rwanda's effort to dismantle camps housing Hutu militias. Mugabe's criticism of those who planned and executed the 1994 genocide does not sit well with his policy of supporting them now, particularly given the international community's guilt over their failure to act to stop the genocide in Rwanda. Mugabe, who is regarded in the region as a statesman, cannot afford to be seen as an ally of those accused of crimes against humanity under international law. A commitment to a cease-fire agreement which isolates, disarms and destroys the power of the Hutu militias is the only way Mugabe can distance himself from these charges and rebuild the international credibility he needs to secure economic aid.

Finally, Zimbabwe is rebuilding its links with Uganda and needs a platform from which to carry this out. In order to achieve this objective, Zimbabwe has to recognise the Congolese element to the rebellion, supported by Uganda. As a confidence building measure to Mugabe,<sup>15</sup> Museveni sent Wamba dia Wamba to Harare (on 28 June 1999 during the Lusaka talks) to convince him that the

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<sup>13</sup> "DRC gobbles up US \$3 million a month", Barnabas Thondhlana, *Zimbabwe Independent*, 8 August 1999.

<sup>14</sup> "Kabila's allies count costs of Congo war" by Ed Stoddard, Reuters story published by *The Monitor*.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Wamba dia Wamba, the leader of the RCD Kisangani, by an ICG analyst on 5 July 1999.

rebellion was brought about not by the Rwandan/Ugandan ambition of building a Hima-Tutsi empire, but by real security concerns and by the need for political solutions to the DRC crisis. Given Zimbabwe's weakening military situation, this is an argument that Mugabe might be willing to accept in return for a share of leadership in the region.

**(c) Angola - A cease-fire agreement in the DRC allows concentration on UNITA activities at home**

Angola's involvement in the war, like that of Rwanda and Uganda, has not been motivated by any real support for the Kabila regime. The Angolans knew that Kabila had links with UNITA, but feared that the collapse of his regime would lead to the withdrawal of his Katangese-dominated army back to Katanga. This move would make it possible for Kabila's troops to link up with UNITA, which controls the Angolan side of the border.

Angola came in to protect domestic security interests threatened by rebel activity on Congolese territory. Angola's critical concerns were to ensure that UNITA did not manipulate the Congolese internal confusion to re-establish and expand its supply routes throughout the country. In particular, Angola was concerned that UNITA's alliance with the Congolese rebels might result in the installation of a UNITA-friendly leader in Kinshasa. Angola needs to be convinced that the Kinshasa leadership which emerges from the cease-fire agreement and National Dialogue process will commit to closing down UNITA access through the DRC.

The Angola government has seen short-term gains from its intervention into the DRC, but may pay the price in the long run. Initially Angola derived some benefits from the intervention by denying UNITA free access to DRC ports and territory, diverting UNITA troops and resources from Angolan territory to the DRC. The strategy certainly made the war more costly for UNITA, but did not prevent them from gaining control over nearly 2/3 of Angolan territory.

Angolan intervention in the DRC last year saved the capital Kinshasa from falling to an audacious rebel attack from the east, but in the process the Angolan army has stretched itself too thin on the ground and compromised itself at home. Angola had up to 7,000 troops in DRC when it repelled the rebel assault on Kinshasa and had since had around 1600 in the country at any given time. UNITA meanwhile has taken, secured and held strategic locations such as Malange and Huambo, and even captured territory within 60 km of the capital Luanda. Analysts in the region have warned that Angolan government forces are seriously overwhelmed by UNITA's advances, and that there is a genuine potential that UNITA could launch an attack to take the capital and gain access to the government controlled oil fields from there. Angolan support for the cease-fire agreement comes from a desperate need to concentrate on the war at home, and from a belief that an alternative to Kabila will be more able and willing to control UNITA activity on DRC territory without the need for Angolan troop intervention.



**(d) Namibia – The break up of the Kaprivi crisis**

There are few reasons for the continued military involvement of Namibia into the DRC. The Namibian involvement can only be explained in terms of the warm relationship between Namibian President Sam Nujoma, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe and Kabila. The friendship between Nujoma and Mugabe started in their early days as freedom fighters against white minority rule in their countries. Nujoma and Kabila used to belong to informal marxist discussion groups in Dar Es Salaam, where they were exiled in 1960's. After Kabila took over, he formed a diamond company with Nujoma.

The war costs to Namibia have not been high and its contribution in troops and equipment has been modest, so the engagement is more a symbolic show of solidarity amongst a group of former liberation movement leaders than the expression of any real interest in the outcome of the war. With the break up of the secessionist crisis in Kaprivi on the border with Botswana, Namibia needs her troops home to battle the rebels who claim independence.

**(ii) The Rebels and their Allies – Unhappy Winners**

The Lusaka agreement gives the rebels and allies exactly what they have asked for. As a group, the Congolese rebels and their external partners have largely achieved their objectives. Although there have been machinations around the signing of the agreement by all the rebel factions, it should be made clear that none of them disputes the content of the agreement. Unhappy with Kabila's government, they have successfully drawn international attention to their concerns, while using the war against the government to pursue their individual agendas. The cease-fire agreement contains mechanisms to address all their demands, and whatever the outcome of the National Dialogue and the domestic power struggle ahead, they have ensured that Kabila is significantly weakened militarily, politically and in terms of regional alliances. The road forward may not be clearly defined, but at the least they have, through the terms of the agreement, secured national, regional and international support for their involvement in the solution to the DRC conflict.

However, there is serious fragmentation within the alliance, and a positioning crisis that could jeopardise the successes attained. There is the leadership quarrel between the RCD-Goma and RCD-Kisangani factions, uncertainty about the potential leadership role of Wamba dia Wamba given his strong Tanzanian and Ugandan support, and Uganda's power over Bemba. Although Rwanda has signed the agreement, its proxy RCD-Goma has not, which opens them to serious pressure from all sides while also allowing Rwanda to pursue its objectives of wiping out the Interahamwe. Significantly, the Banyamulenge issue is not catered for by the agreement and this could also be viewed as an exit strategy for the Rwandans.

One of the reasons that could explain why the RCD-Goma has not signed is to keep the door open for the capture of Mbuji-Mayi by RPA-backed Congolese rebels. This capture is essential to prevent Kabila from having access to resources that he could use to manipulate the National Dialogue and finance his political programs.

**(a) Congolese Rebels – Factions, positions and interests**

***The division of the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD)***

From the beginning, the RCD has been divided. It originated as a compromise movement composed of politicians from different backgrounds and with differing agendas. It was a pragmatic solution, quickly organised after the failure to overthrow Kabila in August 1998. The idea was to have a consensus-based movement, in order to avoid the hijacking of the movement by any one individual, as occurred with Kabila and the AFDL. The internal dynamic soon led to a deterioration in relationships within the RCD. It was no surprise, therefore, that the fragmentation of the RCD led to the paralysis of the signing of the Lusaka cease-fire agreement on 10 July 1999.

At the end of December 1998, it was obvious that there were major splits emerging. The news from Goma was that Lunda Bululu, Mobutu's former Prime Minister, and other Mobutists in the RCD were against Wamba dia Wamba. The split became public in a New Year's eve speech, broadcast on Radio Goma by Wamba which criticised the RCD for succumbing to Mobutists forces, and warned the rebellion against installing another Mobutu in Kinshasa. The real split came in early March when Wamba, by then the RCD President, moved to Kisangani ostensibly to bring Bemba into the RCD and attempt to regain control over the movement. Though Bemba is also associated with the Mobutists,<sup>16</sup> both RCD factions want him on their side due to the strong support he commands in his home province Equateur, and because of his strong financial basis, ensured by those members of Mobutu's government who managed to make billions during the regime. The most likely explanation for the split is that Wamba at that time had called for direct negotiations with Kabila, which could not be accepted by the military/political wing of the RCD.

On the first day of his arrival in Kisangani, Wamba replaced his Rwandan body guards with Ugandan body guards. Since then a plot to oust him has been pursued in earnest.<sup>17</sup> In May 1999, key RCD officials including Emile Ilunga, Bizima Karaha, Moise Nyarugabo, Lunda Bululu and Alexis Tambwe announced that the college of founding members that had elected Wamba as Chairman of RCD, had removed him. Wamba disputed his ousters and claimed that the move was a *coup d'état*. Since then there have been two factions, each claiming to be the legitimate RCD.

Without resolving these divisions, the RCD will face political demise when the DRC enters the post negotiations phase, when it will have to compete politically. Kabila knows that the RCD is in a precarious position and is confident that it will not survive the "peace era".<sup>18</sup> In Lusaka, the RCD took a very defensive position

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<sup>16</sup> His father Saolona Bemba was president of the Chamber of Commerce under Mobutu.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with Wamba dia Wamba, leader of the RCD-Kisangani group, by ICG analyst in Lusaka, Zambia, 5 July 1999.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Bizima Karaha, the security chief of the RCD Goma group by ICG analyst in Lusaka, Zambia, 3 July 1999.

on the political front by not signing the agreement. It can't be ruled out that the RCD will undertake a military action to reaffirm itself as the main player.

Investigations by the South African Foreign Minister and Zambian Minister of State concerning RCD leadership claims are still going on. These will determine whether Wamba should sign the agreement and under what terms. It is quite clear however, that a leadership dispute within the movement cannot justify their refusal to sign or their decision to continue fighting.

***Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC) - An emerging political and military force?***

This movement, led by Jean-Pierre Bemba, has risen from relative obscurity to a central position in the DRC, and constitutes a real competitor to the RCD. When the war broke out last year, Bemba, eager to engage in the anti-Kabila movement, was isolated by the RCD – the only existing rebel movement. “I had differences with the RCD on political and military strategy. That was my only problem with them. When Wamba dia Wamba was the President of the RCD, I wrote two letters to him requesting to join the war against Kabila, but I never got any reply that was why I started the MLC”, Bemba claims.<sup>19</sup>

Bemba has established himself as a recognised rebel leader. He is popular in areas he controls, especially in Equateur where he comes from; he is supported financially by former Mobutists, married to Mobutu's daughter and backed militarily by the UDPF. When Congolese parties to the conflict enter the National Debate, Bemba will be treated as an equal partner. For a man who was not known in Congolese political circles before the war, this is a major motivation for him to enter into negotiations and benefit from his swiftly elevated status. It also explains why he signed so quickly, and before other rebel groups. As the factions within the RCD bicker among themselves, Bemba offers himself as the only credible and rational rebel leader now, and potential alternative to Kabila in the future.

However, Bemba's commitment to stop fighting seems very ambivalent. Although Bemba signed the ceasefire agreement, he put a condition on his signing. He pledged to resume fighting if RCD-Goma did not sign by the end of the week. Before that week finished, he came up with allegations that Kabila had used a Sudanese Antonov to bomb Makanza and Bogbongo, but did not allow any journalists to go there to find evidence of the bombing. In fact it seems he exaggerated the incident to buy time and carry on fighting. Immediately the Ugandan Minister Amama Mbabazi warned that this was a 'serious violation of the cease-fire and could shatter the fragile pact'<sup>20</sup>

It is clear that even as the agreement was signed, Bemba's troops were advancing militarily. They captured Gbadolite and Gemena during the Lusaka negotiations, and also took control of Zongo, a major strategic town on the border

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<sup>19</sup> Interview with Jean-Pierre Bemba, the leader of the Movement for the Liberation of Movement of Congo, by ICG analyst on 4 July 1999.

<sup>20</sup> Irin, 6 August 1999.

with Central African Republic, after the agreement was signed. They are now moving towards Mbandaka, directly threatening Kinshasa.

**(b) Uganda – Peace process as war strategy**

The MLC's ambiguous strategy raises many questions about Uganda's objectives. After the signing of the Lusaka agreement, Uganda deployed more troops in the North. While on the one hand Uganda is key in the efforts for peace, it is also the backer of the most aggressive rebel military force in the post-Lusaka context.

***A favourable military situation and secured interests***

Uganda has justified its intervention by claiming that it is concerned about the security threats emanating from Sudanese supported rebels, the Lords Resistance Army and the Allied Democratic Forces. Uganda's support for rebels in the north of the DRC is aimed at blocking their regional rivals, the Sudanese, from using the area, a potential direct threat to Ugandan sovereignty, access to resources and political stability. Kabila is closely allied to the Khartoum leadership, and has worked with them to define and implement a joint military strategy against Uganda.

Ugandan troops deployed in the northern sector of the Democratic Republic of Congo faced few challenges. The only confrontation was with Chadian troops sent to reinforce Kabila's forces last year. After some weeks, the Chadians withdrew from the frontline, due to unfamiliar terrain and mounting casualties. Since then, Uganda has successfully occupied and controlled this northern sector. The capture of Gbadolite during the Lusaka negotiations was extremely significant; both symbolically as late President Mobutu's birthplace, as a political bargaining chip and strategically due to its airfield and military supply base. The tactic demonstrates the power of Uganda's military and the wider strategic framework being pursued. With Gbadolite in their hands, Uganda can confidently allow inter-Congolese negotiations to go forward, as the agreement stipulates that respective rebel groups and their allies will retain control of areas currently occupied until there is a new political dispensation in the DRC. This will enable Uganda to continue its campaign to neutralise rebel groups trained by Sudan. It will also send a message to neighbouring countries that Uganda has a military force that could have gone all the way to Kinshasa.

However, that strategy has not improved the security of Uganda in the north. The guerrilla movements are fighting inside Ugandan territory, and still causing serious fatalities.

In fact, Uganda's interests in the DRC war are more diverse than just security. The objective is to ensure the country's political and commercial influence in the north east of the DRC. Bemba is an ideal ally in that game plan; he has the support of Mobutists, who have also invested a lot of money in Uganda since 1996. Conversely, Bemba's popularity and military strength in Equateur allows the Ugandans to have access to the gold mines, such as the Kilomoto mines.

Since the beginning of the war in the DRC, a large amount of the gold on the international market has been sold through Kampala.

Bemba has recruited and, with the help of Ugandan instructors, trained thousands of troops since last September<sup>21</sup>. Apart from fighting alongside Ugandan troops Bemba is carrying out political mobilisation of the population by setting up local administration units similar to the local councils in Uganda, which are heavily encouraged by Uganda. By setting up this form of territorial administration, establishing links with Congolese businessmen and supporting their efforts to trade in Kampala, the Ugandans have managed to make their occupation strategy look less Ugandan and more Congolese, and thus ensure a sustainable connection with this region. These allegiances will mean that Uganda's interests and control will be protected after they withdraw their troops.

Uganda's support for Wamba in the RCD leadership crisis can also be interpreted as a strategic alliance that will further the country's interests in a future Congolese government. Although he is considered as being from the Diaspora, Wamba could be a candidate for presidency. He has the support of Tanzania, where he lived and taught, and would give Bas Congo an opportunity to have a president (Mobutu was from Equateur).

***Mounting international and domestic pressure on Museveni to negotiate and withdraw***

International donors who have been supportive of President Museveni's economic reforms are questioning the wisdom of the continued presence of Ugandan troops in the DRC. Donors have been questioning raised defence expenditures, especially since the deployment of troops in August 1998. Museveni is in danger of losing his reputation as a regional broker, and the donor support that this credibility has assured him. The World Bank in particular is criticising military expenditures as Uganda is a beneficiary of the debt relief facility under the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPIC) scheme.

The United States is concerned that Uganda's involvement in the DRC is also weakening the ability of the Ugandan government to deal with the Sudan situation and support the SPLA effectively.

The involvement of Ugandan troops in the DRC also compromises Museveni's domestic agenda as Ugandan public opinion is firmly against troops abroad. With a referendum that will determine the future of his system of government due next year, President Museveni is being pressured to withdraw.<sup>22</sup> Ugandan troops deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo have also been hit by massive desertions due to poor logistical management in delivering salaries, medicine and in some instances, food.

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<sup>21</sup> Interview with Jean Pierre Bemba by ICG analyst in Lusaka, Zambia.

<sup>22</sup> Uganda Confidential, 13 June 1999.

### ***Museveni using the cease-fire agreement as a diplomatic strategy***

President Yoweri Museveni is known for using both war and diplomacy to achieve his objectives. He is famous for his slogan “talk as you fight and fight as you talk”. On his way to power through armed struggle he signed a peace agreement brokered by President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya in 1985, but went ahead and captured power a few months later.

The irony of this war is that Presidents Mugabe and Museveni are close friends, with the same ideological orientation, they were both in exile in Dar-Es-Salaam Tanzania, where former President Nyerere<sup>23</sup> had an influence on their political thinking. Both Presidents support the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA), fighting the Arab dominated regime in Khartoum. The cease-fire agreement is the only way Museveni and Mugabe can re-establish their comradeship. “Uganda does not consider Zimbabwe as an enemy. We just found ourselves on different sides”<sup>24</sup>, according to the Ugandan Minister for regional cooperation Amama Mbabazi.

Another reason behind Museveni’s eagerness to support the Lusaka agreement is to end the suspicions that he has ambitions of building a Hima-Tutsi empire over Africa.<sup>25</sup> This agreement ensures the security of Uganda and gives Museveni the opportunity to reclaim his pan-African credentials. Museveni’s vision for Africa is of an integrated continent both economically and politically: “The greatest single factor why economic integration cannot take place in a context of political fragmentation is the lack of a political superstructure necessary for the integration process. Given the present economically weak states, there is no African state that can impose discipline on the others by economic or other forms of pressure” he explained in a presentation last year<sup>26</sup>. The success of the cease-fire agreement restores the regional solidarity needed for the fulfilment of the objective of an integrated region.

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<sup>23</sup> Julius Nyerere, former President of Tanzania, hosted many young African students in exile in Tanzania. Many of them are now in position of leadership in countries like Uganda, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Mozambique and South Africa.

<sup>24</sup> ICG Analyst interviews with Amama Mbabazi, the Minister in charge of Regional Cooperation and head of the Uganda delegation to the DRC negotiations, on 29 June 1999 in Lusaka, Zambia.

<sup>25</sup> President Museveni of Uganda belongs to the Hima ethnic group, ethnically linked to the Tutsi ethnic group in power in both Rwanda and Burundi. The move to back the Congolese rebels, with both Rwanda and Burundi, has attracted suspicion from African leaders such as Robert Mugabe and Sam Nujoma. Both leaders have accused Museveni of harboring ambitions of building a Hima-Tutsi empire, an accusation he denies.

<sup>26</sup> Towards closer cooperation in Africa, by Yoweri Museveni, Kampala, July 1998

**(c) Rwanda – Hesitating about giving up a military solution?**

***Rwanda risks being isolated by the region***

Rwanda's demands, especially the promise to disarm the Interahamwe militias, have been included in the cease-fire agreement. Rwanda is no longer referred to as an aggressor, but as a party to the conflict. In signing the agreement, they signalled their compliance with the regional consensus among African heads of state that the Congo conflict must be resolved through political means. However, RCD-Goma has refused to sign the cease-fire agreement, ostensibly because the former President Wamba dia Wamba wants to sign. In order to continue their mission to destroy the Interahamwe, Rwanda needs RCD-Goma to remain outside the agreement. By not urging the rebels to sign, and manipulating their position as signatories who have not stopped fighting, Rwanda is seen as the major obstacle in the way of implementation of the agreement despite the fact that all the parties have stated that it is an acceptable framework.

Regional goodwill is being tested by Rwanda's hesitation to work with the region on the DRC peace process.<sup>27</sup> South Africa and Tanzania, Rwanda's allies in the past, are now putting pressure on Rwanda to bring in RCD-Goma. If Rwanda does not comply, it risks being isolated by all its regional allies. In the Lusaka agreement, the recognition of the problem, the pledge to solve it, and the designation of Rwanda as a party and not an aggressor gives Rwanda more legitimacy than ever before to carry out the fight against her enemies on foreign territory. This is an opportunity that they should not miss. Whether Kabila and his allies are able and willing to deliver the Interahamwe could prove a decisive factor in the conflict and the cease-fire agreement. If the Hutu militias are not delivered, Rwanda will not cease fighting on Congolese territory.

***No end to the fighting until the Interahamwe/Ex-FAR issue is resolved, Kagame says***

Among the countries involved in the DRC, Rwanda has been consistent on why it has deployed troops there. Since 1994, Rwandan government officials have said that their only interest in the DRC is the presence of militias and ex- government forces (Ex- FAR) blamed for the 1994 genocide. Both forces have been fighting to return home by force, so Rwanda's position on the Interahamwe problem is to defeat them militarily: "We don't envisage any point at which we shall compromise with genocidaires. If these were people with a cause, then we could find some kind of agreement. You cannot have a bunch of criminals holding a country at ransom. We shall fight them, that is the solution."<sup>28</sup> The number of Hutu militias

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<sup>27</sup> Senior Angolan, Zimbabwean, Tanzanian and South African military officials interviewed by ICG analysts said that the Rwanda leadership risks being isolated from their potential allies if they maintain a militaristic approach on regional issues.

<sup>28</sup> Paul Kagame in an interview by Michael Wakaba and Levi Ochieng for *The East African Newspaper*, 5-11 July 1999.

stand at between 20,000 and 40,000, according to Rwandan official figures. Over 10,000 are said to be fighting alongside Kabila and his allies.

The Rwandans have clearly stated their intention to fight regardless of a cease-fire. Kagame stated: "I can't stop the Zimbabweans doing whatever they want. They can decide to take the whole of their army to Congo even after signing the peace agreement. I can't stop them. But for Rwanda to defend itself, that is a different matter. We have the capacity to defend our country and continue fighting in Congo for a long time with all these problems that you have mentioned. And I think Zimbabweans know that well. Let them get the message very clear. They came in with hot air, saying they were going to march to the border. You ask them what happened."<sup>29</sup>

Rwanda has been pressured to sign, and it is using the cease-fire to gain the moral high ground as a victim of Kabila's machinations. Rwanda also wants to use Lusaka to humiliate the United Nations as a lame duck, a strategy employed in the past: "I know how to fight the insurgents, does the UN also know?"<sup>30</sup> Kagame has remarked.

The Rwandans also have considerable intelligence about the location of the Interahamwe outside the DRC; in CAR, Congo-Brazzaville, Burundi and Tanzania and as sheltered by UNITA and other forces. They believe the only solution is a military one and feel that they are the only ones who can be trusted to achieve this and end the problem once and for all. After the failure of the international community to deal with the issue in the past, and the unwillingness of the international community to deal with it now, Rwanda has no option but to continue to wage war against the militias. Only when the situation has been cleaned up to their satisfaction will they devolve their territorial and military control to the Congolese.

They are also still strategising about capturing Mbuji Mayi, which would be a major turning point in the war and change the balance of force radically. However, such an offensive would result in heavy casualties as the Zimbabweans are still in Mbuji Mayi, and the political price to pay for taking the city after signing the cease-fire would be very high.

### III. CAN THE CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT BE IMPLEMENTED?

#### 1. Assumptions at the Base of the Cease-fire Agreement

The harsh reality is that negotiations proceeding the signing of the cease-fire agreement were dominated by wishful thinking. Negotiators made the following assumptions;

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<sup>29</sup> Paul Kagame, Rwanda's Vice President, in an interview by Michael Wakabi and Levi Ochieng for *The East African*, 5-11 July 1999.

<sup>30</sup> Paul Kagame, Rwanda's Vice President, in an interview that was published in *Der Spiegel* and reviewed by AFP, 10 July 1999.



- That all belligerents are committed to peace in the DRC at this point in time;
- That those parties who sign the agreement will respect and uphold the commitment to cease hostilities and disengage military units despite the fact that some parties remain outside the agreement by not signing;
- That the United Nations Security Council will accept the mandate proposed by the cease-fire agreement for a Chapter 7 peacekeeping force in the DRC;
- That if the UN does engage in the peace process, it will be able to secure member states and major powers' commitment to provide sufficient resources and logistical back up for a vast, long and difficult peacekeeping operation;
- That if the UN is not able or willing to provide a credible peacekeeping force, that former belligerent parties to the conflict can transform themselves into peacekeepers under the mandate of the JMC;
- That a JMC answerable to Ministers of Foreign Affairs (for State actors) and high level military commanders (for non-State actors) and that excludes armed factions within the DRC, can realistically act as a consensual, decision-making body, working to implement the agreement with limited supervision and accountability from neutral sources;
- That the provision for veto for all parties on implementation decisions with regard to the composition of the UN peacekeeping force, the withdrawal of troops after completion of the National Dialogue process etc will seriously compromise the JMC's ability to act in the best interests of the agreement;
- That parties to the agreement will not use the existence of the agreement, and its provisions, to continue to engage in military activity to pursue their enemies, and secure strategic resources and territory in the DRC.

## **2. Post Lusaka Violations**

The cease-fire agreement has already suffered in its earliest phase from two critical problems. Firstly, it has been signed by some but not all identified actors. Secondly, those who have signed have not adhered to the provision to cease hostilities and disengage military units from battle. In fact, many have taken this opportunity to engage further in their military and other ambitions. For example, even though Uganda and Bemba have signed the agreement, Uganda continues to provide military assistance and training to the MLC, and Bemba has continued to pursue territorial gains in north western DRC. It is possible that he has intentions to take Kinshasa militarily.

The Congolese rebels backed by the Rwandans are still strategising about Mbuji Mayi. Mbuji-Mayi was territory held by Zimbabwe at the signing of the agreement, and therefore territory that Zimbabwe had a legitimate claim to control and exploit in the post-agreement, pre-withdrawal phase. If the integrity of the claim is not supported, then Zimbabwe has very little reason (other than economic) to adhere to any part of the cease-fire agreement.

### **3. Fighting Amongst the Allies?**

Fighting that erupted on 7 August and again on 14 August between the RCD Goma faction backed by Rwanda and RCD Kisangani backed by Uganda is the result of serious differences between the allies over their objectives and strategies in the war. Although on the surface the conflict seems to be an internal RCD affair, a closer analysis shows that at the heart of the conflict lie tense relations between Uganda and Rwanda.

Uganda's Chief of Staff, Brigadier James Kazini, claims that Ugandan forces fired at the Rwanda backed RCD faction in self defence after they attempted to prevent the Congolese from meeting Wamba Dia Wamba, the ousted RCD leader on 7 August. "I deployed troops to protect people who wanted to attend the rally by Professor Wamba Dia Wamba, but when they attacked us we shot back in self defence. "However, the Monitor quotes RPA spokesman, Lt colonel Rutayisire: " Kazini is getting the issues upside down; they have corruptly tried to use their muscle to create an impression to the verification team (Zambian) that Wamba is in control and cause trouble. The team may think that Wamba is strong, but this is not Wamba's strength, it is the UDPF's strength"<sup>31</sup>.

Fighting between the RPA and the UPDF broke out again on August 14, forcing the population to flee the city, making a lot of casualties, and stopping the polio vaccination program carried out by the UN. The two armies accuse each other for starting the fighting. They were fighting for the control of several installations as well as of the city international airport, employing mortars, automatic weapons and advanced artillery.

Relations between Rwanda and Uganda, have grown increasingly strained since the beginning of the war a year ago. The disagreements were on three different bases; over strategy and military doctrine, over resources and over individuals.

The Rwandans have always been angry at the Ugandans for taking over part of Kisangani after they had captured the city themselves. The creation of the MLC, led by Bemba and backed by UPDF, created a competition for the RCD and prevented the RCD rebels from advancing further in the North. Soldiers of both Rwanda and Uganda as well as of RCD and MLC have been stationed at the airport and have been controlling separate parts of the city of Kisangani. From then on, relations have deteriorated. The RCD rebels warned the population to refuse to obey instructions given by the UDPF or MLC. Both the National Radio, held by the RCD, and Radio Liberte created by the MLC, have been broadcasting propaganda messages against each other.

The relation between Uganda and Rwanda deteriorated further when Kabila and Museveni signed the Sirte agreement in Libya on 19 April that called for: a cease-fire, the deployment of African peacekeepers, the withdrawal of foreign troops and an inclusive internal dialogue for the Congolese. Following the signing of that agreement, Uganda withdrew some troops and equipment. However, the Rwandans claimed that they have never been consulted on that initiative.

The split inside RCD was also a major factor in increasing the tension between the former allies. The ousted leader Wamba dia Wamba got immediate support and

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<sup>31</sup> The Monitor, August 9, 1999.

protection from Uganda and established its headquarters in Kisangani. His popularity among the population and his efforts to obtain military support for the RCD-Kisangani, added to the presence in the North of 15 000 fighters of the MLC constituted a threat for the RCD-Goma and the Rwandans.

The approach of the war by Uganda and Rwanda has been different from the beginning. While Ugandans were mainly interested in getting local allies and have access to valuable concessions of gold, diamonds and coffee, Rwandans have carried out a military strategy imposing an "occupied territory" administration and seem to have no intention to empower the Congolese while the war is going on.

The current fighting between Uganda and Rwanda in Kisangani makes quite clear that the security interests of those countries, which their intervention in the DRC was supposed to protect, are not the only motivation for the war. There are neither Rwandan, nor Ugandan rebel groups in Kisangani that could justify the presence of those two armies. Instead, the conflict seems to be a battle of commercial influence over the control of diamonds, gold and coffee concessions and of political influence over the outcome of the war.

Behind this resource-based conflict lies also a conflict of individuals that goes back to the time when the future founders of the RPA were fighting with Museveni's National Resistance Army. Salim Saleh, Museveni's half brother and former Minister of Defence is actively involved in the business activities taking place in the North of Congo. He is reported to be pushing Kazini, the Commander of the UDFP operation in the DRC, to dislodge the RPA from Kisangani. The Rwandese forces in Kisangani are commanded by Colonel James Kabare, who was in charge of the DRC army after Kabila took over and who also led the failed military operation that aimed at overthrowing Kabila in August 1998.

After three days of heavy fighting, on 17 August, Rwanda and Uganda agreed on a cease-fire in Kisangani. They say they will send a military team to find out why the fighting erupted. They also agree that they will respect the outcome of the investigation on leadership claims within the RCD undertaken by the South Africans and the Zambians. If the investigation committee doesn't come up with a clear result, both will recommend that the 28 founders of RCD should sign the agreement.

However, the high level of tension between Uganda and Rwanda is likely to change the geopolitical order of the region. The situation dashes hopes of peace and casts doubt on the implementation of the cease-fire. Hostilities between Uganda and Rwanda might lead to the fragmentation of the rebellion into small factions that will be impossible to coordinate. These different factions will be paying lip service to their masters in Kampala and Kigali, instead of joining the National Dialogue and Reconciliation Debate and becoming part of the Congolese solution. This would be critical loss as they are clearly part of the problem and could lead to further fragmentation and to a de facto partition of the DRC, with each army occupying a sector. If Ugandan troops remain in the North, Rwanda could be tempted to concentrate its efforts on Mbuji-Mayi. It could also convince Uganda to give up and withdraw, leaving Rwanda alone facing accusations of being an aggressor. And last, but not least, anti Rwanda feelings are already growing in Uganda. The Ugandans have lost more than 200 soldiers in the battle, and the RPA succeeded in destroying Wamba's headquarters.

#### **4. Disarming of Armed Militias, a Big Job**

The disarming of armed groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo has been the most contentious topic in all peace initiatives since the start of the conflict. The Lusaka cease-fire revolves around the disarming of armed groups, and the mediator spent much of the time building consensus on how to disarm these groups, as there was no common ground amongst the belligerents as to who should carry out the disarmament process. The cease-fire agreement states that: “ There shall be a mechanism for disarming militias and armed groups, including the genocide forces. In this context, all parties commit themselves to the process of locating, identifying, disarming and assembling all members of armed groups in DRC.”<sup>32</sup> The armed groups identified by the cease-fire agreement are the former Rwandan army (Ex-FAR), Interahamwe militias from Rwanda, Allied Forces for Democracy (ADF) from Uganda, Lord Resistance Army (LRA), Uganda National Rescue Front (UNRF II), Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD), West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) and Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA).

Chapter nine of the cease-fire agreement provides a mechanism for disarming the armed groups; “handing over to the UN International Tribunal and national courts, mass killers and perpetrators of crimes against humanity and handing over other war criminals.”<sup>33</sup> To avoid excesses in the process of disarming the armed militias, the cease-fire agreement recommends that the parties concerned, and the UN in some cases, encourage the granting of amnesty and political asylum and inter-community dialogue. The recommendation excludes the genocidaires from these processes.

**The cease-fire agreement ignores the following potential points of disruption in the implementation of this process:**

##### **(i) Ability of JMC to Effectively Verify and Carry out Disarmament of the Militias**

The Joint Military Commission (JMC) is a decision-making body composed of two representatives from each party under a neutral chairman appointed by the OAU in consultations with the parties. The OAU has appointed Algerian General Lallani Rachid who has already taken up his position in Lusaka.

The JMC is supposed to work in co-ordination with the 90 military observers sent by the UN. However, those observers will be based in the belligerent countries' capitals and in Zambia, and it is not clear yet whether they will be deployed on the DRC territory and especially in the east of the DRC. If it is not the case, their ability to monitor military activity of the parties will be limited.

The JMC is tasked with creating mechanisms for “tracking, disarming, cantoning and documenting all armed groups”<sup>34</sup> in the DRC, and verifying that this is achieved.

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<sup>32</sup> Article III clause 22 of the Agreement for a Cease-fire in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

<sup>33</sup> Agreement for a cease-fire in the DRC, chapter 9, p 10.

<sup>34</sup> Chapter 9, Disarmament of Armed Groups, article 9.1, Agreement for a Cease-fire in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Importantly, the JMC must also “be responsible for executing peacekeeping operations until the deployment of the UN Peacekeeping force”.<sup>35</sup> Under the terms of the mandate, the JMC will be required to track, disarm, screen and hand over mass killers, perpetrators of crimes against humanity and genocidaires. This will be an overwhelming task for the JMC, especially considering that Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi have been fighting those groups since 1996.

The JMC is supposed to share intelligence about the militias, the organisation, equipment and location of their forces and other issues related to the cease-fire, on the understanding that such information will be kept confidential. However, there are no provisions in the agreement regarding the chain of command. The only provision is that each party should contribute two senior military officers. It is likely to take time for the parties in the conflict to develop mutual trust and to overcome their suspicions, especially concerning the issue of parties to the conflict giving support to their national guerrillas.

Implementation of the work of the JMC as stipulated in the agreement has been stalled. The JMC's first meeting in Lusaka failed to take off due to disagreements on the schedule of the commission and the absence of Congolese rebels. Rwanda argued that the JMC should start after the rebels have signed the cease-fire agreement, and the three rebel factions have yet to nominate their representatives. The continued delay by the rebels in signing the cease-fire agreement will weaken the power of the JMC to fulfil its mandate.

**(ii) Commitment and Ability of Kabila and Allies to Support Disarmament Process**

For Kabila and Zimbabwe, it will be extremely difficult in the short run to turn against their allies and to disarm them. Kabila doesn't share the ex-FAR and Interahamwe's ideology, though he called for an anti-Tutsi campaign in August 1998, but he might need them to beef up his military forces in case of the break down of the cease-fire. He could easily integrate some of them into his own national army, and pretend that they are Congolese.

**(iii) Possibility of Armed Groups Going Underground**

Experts had warned in their recommendations to Ministers of Defence and Foreign Affairs of intelligence reports indicating that some armed groups had started going underground in anticipation of a peace deal. Given the vastness of the DRC and the possibility of going to Tanzania and Burundi, it will be impossible for any kind of peace enforcement entity to identify and track down the armed groups. Massive movements have already been observed in the Kigoma region. Different national armies, such as Congo–Brazzaville, Sudan and the Central African Republic, have the capacity to integrate armed groups into their forces as a way of protecting them.

**(iv) Exclusion of Some Armed Groups in the Cease-fire Agreement**

Active armed groups like the Mai–Mai, Banyamulenge, former Mobutu soldiers and others have not been included in the agreement. These are major actors and have

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<sup>35</sup> Chapter 8, United Nations Peacekeeping Mandate, Section 2, Peace Enforcement, article 8.4, Agreement for a cease-fire in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

formed alliances with external groups, for example the Mai–Mai are closely allied to with the Interahamwe militias and have been fighting with them against the Rwanda Patriotic Front forces and the Congolese rebels.

The Banyamulenge ethnic group has an armed wing, independent of the RCD, to protect them against hostile Congolese tribes that want them out of Congo. This hostility against them is on the ground of their Rwandan origins, despite the fact that they have been in Congo for more than two centuries. The Banyamulenge have also fallen out with the RCD and the Rwandan authorities over the consequences of the war, which jeopardise their peaceful cohabitation with other Congolese communities. The Banyamulenge's concern is the security of their people and their herds in the Mulenge hills on the border with Burundi. The 1998-1999 war has increased hatred against them and threatens their future in the DRC.

Former Mobutu soldiers and their leaders have been excluded from the cease-fire agreement, yet they have a lot of money and support from some sections of society. Mobutu's former generals have been plotting a come-back; last year they attacked the DRC from neighbouring Congo–Brazzaville and held two towns for some days. Former Mobutu General Baramoto has been making contacts with the Congolese rebels to form a common alliance against Kabila. Over 20,000 former Zairian government soldiers have camps in Congo–Brazzaville and are a trump card for President Sassou Nguesso to counter any hostile regime in Kinshasa and especially any attempt by Kabila to support his opponent Kolelas and the Ninja militias.

For the cease-fire agreement to have a Congolese character, it must comprehensively include all armed groups not represented in Lusaka. Since the agreement caters for the unarmed opposition, the same should apply to armed groups. Although some politicians who were invited to Lusaka claim to represent groups such as the Mai–Mai and Banyamulenge, the groups themselves do not feel that they were in fact represented.

**(v) Classification of UNITA as an Armed Group by the Cease-fire Agreement**

The Lusaka peace agreement classifies UNITA as one of the armed groups operating in the DRC that should be disarmed. This is an over ambitious venture that goes well beyond the DRC conflict. UNITA has existed as an independent rebel movement for over 25 years now, and has been engaged in a civil war with the MPLA government of Angola for most of that time. The provision is doomed to fail given UNITA's considerable power domestically, resource base and international network. Disarming UNITA troops in the DRC will do very little to change the internal situation in Angola. The conflict in Angola has its own complex dynamics, and should be handled separately from the DRC conflict.

Angolan government objectives for their involvement in the DRC, both in 1996 and 1998, were to reduce UNITA's access to supply routes in the country. However, since the deployment of Angolan troops in August last year, the war inside Angola has intensified and UNITA is gaining ground despite losing some bases in Congo.

Some Southern African countries especially Zimbabwe, Namibia and Mozambique are using the Lusaka peace initiative to weaken UNITA. There is also a growing consensus among SADC member countries in support of a military action against UNITA, after the

implementation of the DRC cease-fire agreement. Any attempt to use the Lusaka cease-fire agreement as springboard to fight UNITA will distort the DRC peace process and its impact on the internal Congolese situation. Some actors in the DRC who do not want the peace process to take off might manipulate the UNITA issue to torpedo the process.

## **5. Internal dimensions of the Agreement for the Democratic Republic of Congo**

### **(i) National Dialogue and Reconciliation Debate**

The National Dialogue is an essential element in the plan to deploy a peacekeeping force and oversee the withdrawal of foreign troops and the formation of a new Congolese state administration and army under the new political dispensation. This process will also determine the fate of Kabila, the Congolese rebels and the territorial hold on Congo by foreign powers. The Lusaka agreement recognises that the external dimension of the conflict has been overstated compared with the internal dimension, forcing the Congolese agenda to the periphery. However, as long as the military situation has not changed on the ground, it is unlikely that the Congolese agenda will come back to centre stage. The presence of the foreign troops during the political negotiations could be potentially disruptive, because external players will be tempted to channel objectives and interests that were not achieved during the war through their Congolese allies in the debate.

**National Dialogue and Reconciliation Debate shall lead to a new political dispensation in the DRC. According to the cease-fire agreement the following are the guiding principles:**

- Apart from the Congolese parties to the agreement which are the DRC government, the Congolese Rally for Democracy, and the Movement for the Liberation of Congo, the National Dialogue and Reconciliation Debate shall include representatives of political opposition and the civil society;
- All the participants in the political negotiations shall enjoy equal status;
- All the resolutions adopted by the inter-Congolese political negotiations shall be binding on all the participants.

### **(ii) Weaknesses of the Cease-fire Agreement on the National Dialogue and Reconciliation Debate Can Be Identified;**

- The commitment of the parties is suspect. Kabila hinted in Lusaka that he would not want to share power. He said he would rather organise elections under international supervision;
- The 90 days deadline for the conclusion of the National Dialogue and Reconciliation debate is short, given the fact that issues to be discussed are aimed at ending the war and spell out the future of the DRC. There is a worry that if the participants are not given a deadline, the negotiations will be unnecessarily delayed by some parties to buy time, as occurred with the national conference under Mobutu. The facilitator that is chosen to direct the debate should be dynamic and adjust the timetable if all the relevant issues are not exhausted in the proposed 90 days;

- The whole political negotiation process is entrusted to the facilitator; if the facilitator is biased or incompetent, the whole process can collapse leading to the violation of the cease-fire.

**(iii) Re-establishment of State Administration Throughout the National Territory of the DRC**

During the Lusaka negotiations, two points created high tensions: the establishment of one administrative structure throughout the DRC; and the creation of an unified army.

The cease-fire agreement makes the DRC temporarily a protectorate, by allowing parties to the conflict to continue to occupy the areas they control, until the UN peacekeeping force takes over. The appearance that the DRC is a single nation will be maintained by a consultative mechanism among Congolese parties for the purposes of carrying out activities of national interest such as health, education and trade policy. But actual power will remain with the external parties to the agreement, and this ambiguity may be a motivation for parties to make sure the National Dialogue is prolonged, so that they remain centres of power.

The lack of central authority is likely to encourage warlords to emerge from elements in rebel factions, some elements in Kabila 's government and different armed groups. They will defy the control of any central authority that will come out of the National Dialogue process.

**(iv) Formation of the National Army**

The formation of a new Congolese national army will be a major challenge towards building new democratic institutions for the DRC. At present there are many armed Congolese groups opposed to each other. Incorporating all these armed groups into one national army is going to be a considerable challenge to the Congolese parties and the international community. All these armed groups have developed different political agendas and are serving different masters, which makes it difficult to develop a cohesive group willing to serve the same interests.

The cease-fire agreement recommends that the formation of the national army is carried out after the Congolese political negotiations. The agreement contradicts itself by pre-empting the Congolese input and recommending that the formation of a new Congolese national army will revolve around the current armed parties which are the government forces, the armed forces of the RCD and MLC. This is a mistake because other Congolese political parties and civil society are yet to give their views about the character of the new national army. Giving a leeway to the armed parties to the conflict is dangerous because the new national army will serve the interests of their masters rather than of the Congolese people. Both the rebels and Kabila 's government represent the armed side of the conflict and by giving them power to form the new national army, the unarmed political parties are sidelined.



## **6. The Issue of a Peacekeeping Force: the Belligerents Turned into Peacekeepers?**

The call for an international peacekeeping force in Congo is plagued by the complexity of the situation. One month after the majority of actors have signed the agreement, there is still considerable military activity and aggression in the country; what peace will there be to keep even when all parties are signatories? There is a provision in the mandate that in the interim stage of implementation of the agreement, the parties to the conflict themselves will perform peacekeeping duties, co-ordinated through the JMC. Is it feasible to expect recent belligerents to transform themselves into peacekeepers? Should a UN or international, non-regional force not be forthcoming, the task of peace enforcement will be added to the mandate of belligerent forces. It is possible that the parties to the conflict might take such an opportunity to forcefully disarm, attack or harass the very people they are tasked to keep peace with.

The Lusaka cease-fire agreement calls for a United Nations force with a mandate not only for peacekeeping but peace enforcement as well. "The United Nations Security Council, acting under Chapter 7 of the UN charter and in collaboration with the OAU, shall be requested to constitute, facilitate and deploy an appropriate peacekeeping force in the DRC to ensure implementation of the agreement, and taking into account the peculiar situation of the DRC, mandate the peacekeeping force to track down all armed groups in the DRC. In this respect, the UN Security Council shall provide the requisite mandate for peacekeeping force."<sup>36</sup>

The request for a United Nations peacekeeping force under chapter 7 by regional African heads of states though unrealistic, is a well-calculated political move. The request is based on the fact that the UN recently approved a massive peacekeeping operation for Kosovo. African leaders are putting the UN and the Western governments on the spot; failure to approve a UN peacekeeping force under the terms put forward by the Lusaka summit will be interpreted as a display of double standards. The Somali experience, where United States troops, under a UN mandate, were killed in theatre still haunts Western governments, making it difficult for them to approve a full-fledged UN operation in the DRC.

The composition of the UN peacekeeping force is another potential area of disagreement. The agreement for a cease-fire in the Democratic Republic of Congo states that "composition of the UN keeping forces shall be selected from countries acceptable to all parties." Given the diverse and conflicting interests between parties to the cease-fire agreement, it will be very difficult to reach agreement on a uniform composition of the UN peacekeeping force. Any party or combination of parties could use this provision to stall the implementation process.

Potential troop donors of peacekeeping troops like South Africa are expressing caution. A peace plan was drawn up by President Thabo Mbeki shortly before Christmas last year, and circulated to Rwandan and Ugandan leaders, and South African SADC partners. The Mbeki proposal calls for setting up a peacekeeping force that would be

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<sup>36</sup> Article III clause 11a of the Agreement for a cease-fire in the Democratic Republic of Congo.  
"SA told to stay out of Congo" by Howard Barel Mail and Guardian, 18-24 June 1999.

constituted largely of elements from the warring factions themselves on a willing partner basis between the combatants and brought together under neutral command. Mbeki's proposal was based on realisation that a large force would be necessary to enforce the peace in the DRC; a UN study indicates that it would take an estimated 100,000 troops to both enforce and keep peace in the DRC.

South Africa is not yet clear whether it is willing to contribute troops. South African security experts are advising their government to be cautious. Richard Cornwell of the Institute of Security studies in Pretoria cautioned Mbeki and other South African foreign policy makers against "mission creep" in peacekeeping, where a country ends up bearing a great deal more responsibility for a mission than it initially intended. Experts agree there was a danger that South Africa could get bogged down in the DRC, "But I think Mbeki is no fool and knows this very well. He knows from the Lesotho operation that things can become more costly than was initially envisaged"<sup>37</sup>.

The South African plan has not quashed the conventional notion of an international peacekeeping force. The agreement for a cease-fire borrows a leaf from the South African proposal by calling for the formation of a Joint Military Commission, with a mandate to carry out peacekeeping operations until the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force.

The effective deployment of a peacekeeping force for the DRC will determine the success of the cease-fire agreement. The main challenges of the force will be the disarming of the armed groups operating in the DRC, ensuring that the peacekeeping operation is not used as a vehicle for parties to continue pursuing their war aims and cause a de facto partition of the country based on their desires for control over strategic territory. Nevertheless, a neutral, respected peacekeeping force could achieve some success in the following areas;

- Providing support for an increasing confidence in the National Dialogue and internal reforms in Congo. Local populations would have the guarantee that the international community will be watching internal events closely as long as their troops are committed inside the country;
- Putting pressure on extremists and provide a mechanism to protect local populations from harassment and coercion;
- Providing a layer of neutrality and accountability currently absent in the country. Belligerents would not be the only guarantors of peace, and any violations on their part would be recorded.

## **7. Withdrawal of Foreign troops: Will the Deadline be Met?**

The orderly withdrawal of foreign forces which include troops from Zimbabwe, Uganda, Angola, Namibia and Rwanda has been a point of disagreement by parties to the conflict in the last six months of negotiations in Lusaka. President Kabila and his allies insisted that foreign troops uninvited by the Congolese government should withdraw without any

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<sup>37</sup> Professor John Stremblau, head of the department of international relations at the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa.

conditions, while Rwanda and Uganda insisted that all foreign troops should be given the same treatment.

The Agreement for a Cease-fire in the DRC does not spell out the modalities of the withdrawal of foreign troops; it only gives a deadline of 180 days. The agreement leaves the issue to the UN, the OAU and the JMC. Recognising the difficulties implied by withdrawal, mediators postponed defining the details of the withdrawal as a way of avoiding a stalemate.

Countries with troops have interests that led to their deployment, and will not withdraw them until they have achieved their key objectives regardless of the requirements of the cease-fire agreement. Uganda and Rwanda went into the DRC to overthrow Kabila and they will not send their troops home until they are sure that Kabila is in a weak position both politically and militarily. Zimbabwe knows that Kabila has no army, withdrawing troops prematurely defeats the logic of their intervention, which was to save Kabila's regime. Both sides are training thousands of Congolese troops to secure their objectives after they withdraw. The 180 days for the withdrawal of foreign troops laid down in the agreement is not enough for both sides to arm their allies before leaving. Fresh training and disarming of Congolese parties to the conflict will put a strain on the peace process as different parties enter into the National Dialogue. Any disagreement can lead to the break out of war again since the troops and equipment for war will still be in place.

The verification of the orderly withdrawal of foreign troops will be hampered by the difficulty of sorting Congolese fighters from foreign troops. There will be an attempt by foreign troops to leave behind some of their troops as a back up to their respective allies, which will be hard for monitors to detect. It is difficult for example to differentiate a Congolese Katangese from a suspected Hutu militia from Rwanda or Burundi, as it is difficult to differentiate a Nyamulenge Tutsi from a Tutsi from Rwanda. Troops from foreign countries have been fighting alongside Congolese troops on both sides and have been effectively integrated; making identification and differentiation very difficult; especially for an international peacekeeping force.

Most of the countries that sent troops in the DRC are financially constrained and will find it difficult to mobilise funds to withdraw their troops. Uganda has announced that it will take a year of preparation to withdraw its troops from the DRC.

#### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The DRC conflict has three dimensions: local, national and regional. For peace to return to the DRC, the peace process should comprehensively deal with the conflict at all three levels. For the international community this is a unique window of opportunity to re-engage with the region; to demonstrate commitment to African peace processes, and to rebuild credibility with partners in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa. In particular, the international community should support regional efforts to restore the territorial integrity of the DRC and to resolve its security issues. Given the failure to prevent the Rwandan genocide in 1994 and to address the long term security issues it created, ICG recommends that the UN Security Council, its members and the OAU seize the opportunity to:

## **1. At the Regional Security Level**

### **(i) Put Continuous Pressure on all Rebel Factions to Sign the Cease-fire Agreement and on all Parties to Respect the Cease-fire Agreement**

US, Security Council and regional diplomatic pressure should be directed towards Uganda and Rwanda to respect the Kisangani cease-fire; to respect their commitment to the Lusaka cease-fire; and to take a common stand on the issue of the RCD signature. Although the rebel leaders have developed their own individual and group interests, Rwanda and Uganda can still prevail on them. The MLC is very dependent on Ugandan military support and by capturing Gbadolite, Zongo, moving towards Mbandaka and directly threatening Kinshasa during the Lusaka process even after the signing, has proven to be the most aggressive military force in the picture. US diplomatic pressure should be directed towards Uganda, which shows obvious contradiction in being the architect of the peace process on the one hand, and in backing the MLC strategy of aggression on the other. US Pressure should also be put on Rwanda to make RCD-Goma sign the agreement so that the Congolese may start their national debate process.

### **(ii) Support the JMC**

The Security Council Member states should undertake a serious examination of needs of the JMC, and support those needs fully.

### **(iii) Strengthen the Mandate of the OAU-appointed Chairman of the Joint Military Commission**

Understanding that the JMC is composed of representatives of the belligerent parties, and has no accountability nor supervision mechanism to any neutral body; Considering that it is supposed to start "executing peacekeeping operations" immediately, including monitoring the cease-fire, ICG recommends that:

- The JMC chair should be given the political means and logistical resources to be able to actively monitor the work of the JMC and be able to overcome any deadlock situations if the parties don't comply with the provisions agreed upon. Those means include sanctions, diplomatic isolation, cut off of economic co-operation, military action and other appropriate actions;
- The OAU should play a more active role as arbiter of the agreement and carry out that role until the UN PK force is able to provide accountability and supervision, as mandated in the agreement.

### **(iv) Mobilise International and Regional Efforts for a Comprehensive Solution to the Ex-FAR and Interahamwe problem**

Considering that the international community missed the opportunity to deal with the security threat posed by the Interahamwe and ex-FAR re-grouped in refugee camps at the Rwandese border between 1994 and 1996; Considering that the RPA will confront the ex-FAR and Interahamwe on DRC territory rather than on Rwanda territory, and that they have decided to defeat their enemies militarily; Considering that the continuous fighting between the RPA and the Interahamwe, ex-FAR and allied Congolese groups

like the Mai-Mai will contribute to more political fragmentation, create more suffering in the population and increase humanitarian needs, ICG recommends that the international community support a proactive non-military response to the problem by:

- Putting pressure on the Kabila and Zimbabwe governments to agree to demobilise Interahamwe and ex-FAR as a gesture of good will in the regional peace process;
- Encouraging the neighbouring countries of the DRC to make a special effort to arrest the leaders of those groups responsible for the genocide and whose names are on the list of the International Tribunal in Arusha;
- Supporting a demobilisation and re-integration plan for the Interahamwe and ex-FAR, who are estimated to count between 30,000 and 45,000 members. This recommendation is based on the experience of successful re-integrating more than 10,000 Interahamwe and ex-FAR (since Feb 1999) into Rwandan society. Those who returned to Rwanda are registered in re-education camps and then sent back to their communes of origin or integrated into the army.

**(v) The Governments of the Region Should be Strongly Encouraged to Practice Inclusive Politics and Offer Reintegration Alternatives to their Respective Rebellions**

**(vi) Support a Peacekeeping Force in the DRC with a Realistic and Concrete Mandate**

The terms set by the Lusaka agreement ask for a chapter 7 force that will have the mandate to, among other things: “track down all armed groups in the DRC, screen the mass killers, perpetrators of crimes against humanity and other war criminals; handing over “génocidaires to the International Crimes Tribunal for Rwanda; and working out such measures (persuasive or coercive) as are appropriate for the attainment of the objectives of disarming, assembling, repatriation and reintegration into society of the Armed Groups”. A chapter 7 force would require at least 100 000 soldiers to monitor the situation from the Sudanese to the Zambian borders and from the Congo-Brazzaville to the Tanzanian borders.

In the event that the UN Security Council doesn't authorise a chapter 7 force, support should be given to the JMC to carry out that mandate and more UN/OAU observers should be sent. The Congolese population is favourable to a UN force for several reasons:

- As a confidence building mechanism and as a sign that the International community has an interest in Congo;
- As observers of the implementation of the agreement, as investigators of the violations of the cease-fire and protector of civilian populations;
- As a catalytic mechanism to help the population distance itself from the fighters;
- As a provider of humanitarian assistance.

**2. At the National Level**

**(i) Support the Congolese National Dialogue and Reconciliation Debate**

The international community should support and monitor the National Dialogue and Reconciliation Debate by:

- Giving technical and expert support to the Facilitator chosen by SADC;
- Facilitating disadvantaged participants to attend the negotiations;
- Encouraging the Facilitator to include Congolese armed groups that were not represented in Lusaka. These are the Mai – Mai, the Banyamulenge, the former Mobutu soldiers, to make sure no potential disrupters are excluded;
- The issue of the nationality of the Banyamulenge has to be addressed;
- Enforcing the provisions in the agreement that all participants should have an equal status and making sure that the negotiations are all-inclusive;
- Monitoring the proceedings of the debate and ensuring that they are free of manipulation and intimidation.

### **3. At the Local Level**

#### **(i) Create a Donor Liaison Group to Mobilise Resources for Humanitarian Assistance, Local Reconstruction and Reconciliation Initiatives**

The population of Congo wants peace and welcomes the Lusaka agreement as a step towards it. However, the rehabilitation of social services and the improvement of the economic situation is a precondition for lasting peace. More and more, the population sees the militia groups, including the Mai-Mai, as predatory forces and is distancing itself from them. In spite of the insecurity, reconciliation efforts are underway in the Kivus, for example between Mai-Mai leaders and the Banyamulenge.

#### **The international donors should:**

- Support the displaced persons who wish to return to their communities and assist the communities to rehabilitate structures such as schools and hospitals;
- Support the reconciliation activities undertaken by local NGO's;
- Support the participation of civil society in the National Dialogue at the grassroots level.

## ANNEXE A

### **CATALOGUE OF DRC PEACE INITIATIVES SINCE AUGUST 1998**

Efforts to broker a peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo began six days after war broke out on 2 August 1998. From that point until the signing of the cease-fire agreement on 10 July 1999, there have been monthly peace initiatives aimed at resolving the crisis, both at a Ministerial and Presidential level.

#### **1. 8 August 1998: Victoria I (Zimbabwe)**

Two days after the conflict broke out, Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia sent troops to stop the Congolese rebels from taking over Kinshasa. Six days after the conflict broke out the South African Development Community (SADC) countries together with Uganda and Rwanda, tried to resolve the conflict peacefully through talks. Zimbabwe, which holds the chairmanship of SADC's political, defence and security organ used this first regional summit on the DRC conflict to put forward a request for military intervention to support Kabila. The proposal was supported by Angola and Namibia. South Africa and other SADC members gave a lukewarm response.

#### **2. 18 August 1998: Victoria II (Zimbabwe)**

All the countries involved in the conflict attended this second regional meeting. This was the first time the rebels were invited to attend a summit but there was disagreement on the mode of involving the rebels. It was decided that a proxy mechanism should be put in place to allow consultation with the rebels. However, the rebels insisted on holding direct talks with President Kabila and his government officials, a demand that was not met until almost a year later.

#### **3. 22 August 1998: Pretoria Talks (South Africa)**

This meeting was called by President Nelson Mandela as an alternative to the highly charged Zimbabwean led Victoria Falls meetings. Zimbabwe's hard line position on the rebels and their allies Rwanda and Uganda was obstructing the peace process. The Pretoria Talks were attended by Presidents Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya, Rwanda's Vice-President Paul Kagame and Kabila's representative, Justice Minister Mwenze Kongolo. At the meeting Mandela introduced the idea of a transition government in the DRC tasked with setting up the necessary structures for democratic elections. The meeting exposed divisions within SADC as President Mugabe demanded to know which side Mandela was on in the conflict. Reversing his initial position against SADC's military intervention in the DRC, Mandela said Kabila was entitled to invite friendly countries to support him.

#### **4. 11- 13 September 1998: Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)**

This was the first official meeting that attempted to discuss a draft cease-fire agreement; the meeting was attended by all the Defence Ministers from the belligerent countries. The meeting broke down after Kabila and his allies refused to allow the rebels into direct negotiations. Uganda and Rwanda walked out of the meeting in response. However, the cease-fire document presented at this meeting by OAU experts has formed the basis of the final, accepted cease-fire agreement text.

**5. 14 September 1998: Grande Baie (Mauritius)**

The conflict in the DRC dominated the SADC heads of state summit in Mauritius. There was pressure on all SADC members to contribute troops to protect Kabila's government but no framework for ending the conflict was presented. Instead, the meeting highlighted the differences in SADC on the DRC crisis. Uganda and Rwanda were invited as observers.

**6. 14 September 1998: The Chiluba initiative begins**

This was the first attempt by President Chiluba of Zambia to mediate an end to the DRC conflict. He travelled with President Benjamin Mkapa to Uganda and Rwanda for consultations. Although not much came out of the tour, Chiluba started to appear as mediator and gained the confidence of Uganda and Rwanda. However, Chiluba did not manage to gain credibility from Kabila's allies or Southern African leaders due to allegations that the Zambian authorities support UNITA.

Concurrently, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was in Rwanda and Uganda negotiating the safe passage of Rwandan and Ugandan troops stranded in Western Congo after attempting to take Kinshasa. The offensive was stopped by Angolan and Zimbabwean forces. President Mugabe agreed the stranded fighters would be given safe passage after surrendering their weapons. The Rwandan and Ugandan fighters are said to have escaped by crossing through territory controlled by UNITA.

**7. 18 October 1998: East African Community summit (Nairobi)**

The East African Community consultative summit on the DRC conflict was attended by President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya, President Yoweri Museveni and Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania. The meeting was aimed at forging a common position to which the three East African countries could sign-up. Uganda is the only country in the East African Community with troops in the DRC. With the signing of the East African community treaty scheduled for this year, Kenya and Tanzania are worried about the implications of EAC member state Uganda's continued involvement in DRC. However, the heads of state reached an agreement to present a common line on the conflict.

This strategy did not work. The differences between the three states came to the surface when President Moi made a statement to the effect that all "uninvited" troops should leave DRC; implying that Uganda should withdraw from Congo. This remark caused great concern in Uganda, prompting the Kenyan Ambassador to Uganda Peter Ole Nkuraiya to issue a correction to the press which asserted Moi had been misquoted. Nkuraiya said that President Moi had meant that all foreign troops should withdraw from DRC, in line with Uganda's position on the DRC.

If Kenya's position on Congo has been somewhat inconsistent, Tanzania's has also been vague. Some analysts now believe that the Tanzania leadership is divided over which policy to adopt. President Mkapa and former President Nyerere are close to President Museveni and giving him the benefit of the doubt. Other senior and military officials are in favour of persuading Uganda and Rwanda to drop a militaristic approach to regional issues and instead pursue political solutions.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> "The Congo effect" by Adonia Ayebare, *The East African Alternatives*, January-February 1999.



**8. 28 October 1998: Lusaka (Zambia)**

This meeting was attended by Foreign and Defence Ministers of Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Mozambique, Uganda, Rwanda, Gabon, South Africa and Kenya. For the first time a draft cease-fire agreement was adopted and a mechanism for implementing and monitoring it was discussed pending further consultations. Again, the true shortcoming of this meeting, like its predecessors, was the failure to directly involve the rebels.

**9. 20 November 1998: the Francophone summit in Paris (France)**

French President Jacques Chirac hosted the 20th Franco–African summit in Paris, France on 20, November 1998. The meeting attracted a record 34 African heads of states with representation from 49 African countries. At the end of the summit seven key actors in the DRC conflict (Kabila's government and his allies Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia and Chad as well as rebel allies Uganda and Rwanda) gave a verbal commitment to sign a cease-fire agreement in Lusaka, Zambia on 8 December 1998.

The significance of the Paris summit is that it introduced the DRC conflict to a wider audience of African countries not directly involved in the conflict. President Kabila gained support of other African heads of states that considered the decision by Rwanda and Uganda to send troops to Congo a direct violation of the territorial integrity of the DRC. The United Nations and the OAU gave a pledge to support all peace initiatives on the DRC including sending a peacekeeping force if the parties concerned signed a cease-fire agreement. The then Chairman of the OAU, President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso attempted to shift the base of the mediation from SADC to the Burkina Faso, under the OAU structure and his leadership. His interest was to capitalise on the Paris summit, and bring Francophone Africa back into the picture. He suggested that the signing of the Congo cease-fire agreement be shifted to Burkina Faso on 17 and 18 of December at a special OAU summit, a suggestion that was ignored by the predominantly Anglophone East, Central and Southern African states.

**10. 8 December 1998: Lusaka (Zambia)**

This meeting was a follow up to the Paris Franco–African summit that recommended the December signing of a cease-fire agreement. This meeting broke down because President Kabila vowed never to meet the rebels face to face. He felt empowered to take this step due to the show of support he received from other African heads of state in Paris. The meeting was postponed to 28 December 1998 to give time to all parties to consult on cease-fire proposals agreed on in Paris.

**11. 18 December 1998: OAU conference (Burkina Faso)**

The meeting was attended by President Kabila and delegates from Uganda, Angola, Rwanda, and Zimbabwe who agreed to meet the rebels directly in Lusaka, Zambia on 28 December and sign the cease-fire. The meeting was facilitated and organised by the staff of the OAU's central organ for conflict prevention, management and resolution and was chaired by President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso.

**12. 28 December 1998: Lusaka (Zambia)**

For the third time running, the talks failed to take off due to disagreements on the participation of the rebels. President Kabila and his allies insisted on proximity talks with the rebels, while the rebels and their allies pushed for direct talks. South Africa proposed

face to face talks involving all warring parties, and suggested that talks without the rebels were a waste of time. It was this stand that later persuaded Kabila and his allies to soften their line.

**13. 16 January 1999: Lusaka (Zambia)**

This meeting was attended by Defence and Foreign Affairs ministers from countries with troops in the DRC, and representatives from the Kabila government. The rebels did not directly participate in the talks. The meeting was to discuss and adopt a cease-fire agreement with the aim of calling a heads of states summit to sign a cease-fire agreement. The ministers failed to reach a consensus on key issues such as the direct participation of the rebels, the withdrawal of foreign troops and disarming of various militia groups in DRC.

**14. 18 January 1999: Windhoek (Namibia)**

This was a significant meeting in the peace process; informal talks brought together countries from opposing sides in the conflict. The one day summit led to a great leap forward in the process. There was consensus on the modalities of the cease-fire agreement and heads of states present committed to signing a cease-fire agreement in Lusaka, Zambia. The weakness of the Windhoek meeting was the silence about the participation of the rebels and the absence of Kabila and the President Dos Santos of Angola.

**15. February 1999**

The month of February was dominated by bilateral consultations between allies about the cease-fire agreement. President Fredrick Chiluba of Zambia assisted by President Joachim Chissano of Mozambique travelled in the region meeting all sides in the conflict. During the weekend of 27- 28 February, five regional heads of states were involved in consultations. The main issues that arose were security guarantees for Uganda and Rwanda, the withdrawal of foreign troops from Congo, the deployment of UN peacekeeping force and the direct involvement of rebels in the talks.

**16. 6 March 1999: Pretoria (South Africa)**

This meeting was called by President Nelson Mandela, to convince Kabila's backers to soften their stand and agree on the direct participation of rebels into the talks. The meeting tackled the issue of President Chiluba's role as mediator in conflict, a contentious point given allegations by the Angolan government that Zambian authorities have been arming UNITA. While there was no concrete outcome, the meeting marked a last ditch effort by Mandela to resolve the crisis before handing over power.

**17. 23 March 1999: Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)**

The Addis meeting was attended by 36 African foreign ministers. It was at this meeting that Kabila's side first agreed to meet the rebels. Abdoulaye Yerodia Ndombasi, Kabila's Foreign Minister, said Kabila was ready to meet the rebels "to reach an agreement on a Constitution on electoral law and elections". Later, Kabila announced that he would only meet the rebels on condition that the meeting took place in Kinshasa for security reasons, a condition that the rebels rejected.

**18. 9 April 1999: UN initiative (New York)**

Following nine months of inaction in relation to the DRC conflict, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan appointed former Senegalese Foreign Minister Mustafa Niasse as his special envoy for the DRC peace process. The main task of the UN special envoy was to identify the main obstacles to signing the agreement and evaluate the progress made so far by the Chiluba initiative. He was also tasked to establish contacts with political and civic leaders in the DRC and determine the contribution to be offered by external actors to the negotiated settlement of the DRC conflict.

**19. 19 April 1999: Sirte (Libya)**

This meeting was seen as a major step forwards, as two major belligerent parties signed an agreement and there was an attempt to deploy a peacekeeping force. Presidents Kabila and Museveni, two of the central actors together with Presidents Afeworki of Eritrea and Derby of Chad, held talks in Libya and signed an agreement that called for: a cease-fire, the deployment of African peacekeepers, the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the DRC and an internal dialogue process for all parties in the DRC.

As a follow up initiative, Libya sent an advance party to Uganda to prepare for the deployment of peacekeeping troops. The deployment of 41 troops caught the Ugandan authorities completely off guard. Ugandan Minister for Regional Co-operation Amama Mbabazi said that the Ugandan authorities had not expected the Libyan government to send troops within a few days.<sup>39</sup>

The Sirte initiative injected momentum into the DRC peace process because it proved that a deal could be signed. President Chiluba kickstarted the Lusaka initiative by building on what the Libyan President had achieved at Sirte, and by integrating the Libyan initiative into the Lusaka process. President Kadaffi achieved what he wanted, which was to be recognised as an African peace maker, and Museveni got what he wanted by convincing Kadaffi and President Derby to pull out Chadian troops from the DRC. This then paved the way for Ugandan troops and MLC rebels to take new strategic territory such as Gbadolite and Gemena.

The Sirte<sup>40</sup> agreement was rejected by Rwanda and all the three Congolese rebel factions on the grounds that they were not directly involved in the negotiation and signing of the deal. Significantly, Kagame thought that the Sirte agreement was based on good intentions despite the fact that it was negotiated in a hurry.<sup>41</sup>

**20. 5 May 1999: Dodoma talks (Tanzania)**

Museveni, Bizimungu, Mkapa and Kagame met in Tanzania to forge a common position on the Lusaka peace process. This meeting was prompted by the emerging rifts between Uganda and Rwanda over the conduct of the war in the DRC. The Tanzanian President assigned his Foreign Minister Jakaya Kikwete to hold meetings with Ugandan, Rwandan and rebel officials and work out a joint position for Lusaka.

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<sup>39</sup> Interview with ICG analyst at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kampala, June 1999.

<sup>40</sup> Sirte is a small town in Libya.

<sup>41</sup> "We can fight on for years" by Michael Wakabi and Levi Ochieng, *The EastAfrican* 5-11 July 1999.

The initiative failed to produce any significant progress. A meeting scheduled to take place in Kampala between the two antagonistic rebel groups; (RCD Goma and RCD Kisangani) with Rwandan, Tanzania and Ugandan officials did not take place as RCD Kisangani did not show up<sup>42</sup>. As a result there was no common position amongst the rebels once they got to Lusaka, resulting in their failure to sign. Mediator Frederick Chiluba and Tanzanian officials were blamed for this outcome.

**21. 15 May 1999: Sirte (Libya)**

This was a follow up on the Sirte agreement of April 1999. In attendance was President Kabila, President Blaise Campaore chairman of the OAU, President Ange Felix Patasse of the Central Africa Republic, Issayas Afeworki of Eritrea, Yaya Jameh of Gambia, Vice-President Kagame of Rwanda, Former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, former Algerian President Ben Bella and the UN Secretary General's special envoy for the DRC, Mustafa Niasse.

The significance of this follow-up meeting was that the attendance list was expanded to involve other actors in the DRC conflict such as Kagame, who refused to put a signature on the Sirte agreement until Rwanda's security concerns were addressed. This meeting further confirmed that Libya's intentions to shift from Arab politics and become a major player in Great Lakes affairs.

**22. 28 – 30 May 1999: Kampala (Uganda)**

For the first time since the war broke out on 2 August 1998 a delegation of Ministers from the DRC government visited Uganda, these included Justice Minister Mwenze Kongolo and Economics minister Saolona Bemba<sup>43</sup>. The meeting was a follow up to Sirte, both Uganda and the DRC "committed themselves to setting up a committee of experts that will work out practical modalities for the implementation of the fore mentioned agreement. Both delegations undertook to promote, in the shortest time possible, the Sirte spirit to all parties involved in the DRC."<sup>44</sup> Uganda's Minister of State for Regional Co-operation under played the importance of the Kampala meeting with the DRC government delegation, saying it merely showed that Uganda was interested in the peaceful resolution of the Congo crisis.

**23. 17 June 1999: Pretoria Mini Summit (South Africa)**

Regional leaders took advantage of President Thabo Mbeki's inauguration to hold a consultative summit to iron out their differences over a proposed cease-fire for the DRC. South Africa introduced radical proposals aimed at making the DRC peace process more realistic. These included direct talks involving all parties to the conflict, cessation of troop movement until there is an acceptable political arrangement by all Congolese parties to the conflict, and withdrawal of all foreign troops after the deployment of a peacekeeping force. This meeting set the stage for the Lusaka summit that took place on 10 July 1999.

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<sup>42</sup> Interview with a senior Tanzanian diplomat on 6 July 1999 in Lusaka, Zambia, by the ICG analyst.

<sup>43</sup> Saolona Bemba is the father of Jean Pierre Bemba the rebel leader of the Movement for the Liberation of Congo. On his visit to Uganda he called on the Uganda government to convince his son to return home.

<sup>44</sup> A joint communiqué dated 1 June 1999 by Ugandan officials and DRC government officials after their meeting in Kampala, Uganda.

## **ANNEXE B**