

CONFIDENTIAL

His Excellency Ban Ki-Moon
Secretary-General
United Nations
New York, NY 10017

1 December, 2010

Your Excellency,

We, the 64 organizations below, write with suggested recommendations to improve the joint assessments currently being undertaken by the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the UN Stabilization Mission in DRC (MONUSCO). It is critical that the joint assessment process accurately reflects the security realities on the ground in DRC in order to ensure that MONUSCO is configured optimally to fulfill its mandate, particularly with regard to the protection of civilians.

Security Council Resolution 1925 established that any future reconfigurations of MONUSCO would be determined by the “evolution of the situation on the ground” with respect to three key indicators: minimizing the threat of armed groups; improving the capacity of the DRC security forces to protect civilians; and consolidating non-military state authority. We understand that the preliminary findings of the joint assessments focusing on these three indicators will be contained in your report to the Security Council in January 2011.

Concerns with Joint Assessment

Reflecting on the first of three planned joint assessment cycles, we appreciate MONUSCO’s efforts in establishing a clear and understandable methodology from vague indicators in Resolution 1925. We also recognize the significant effort invested in visiting 55 locations throughout DRC. Nevertheless, we are concerned that the joint assessments on occasion excluded key constituencies whose insights are important for obtaining a more complete picture of realities on the ground, such as community members and local civil society. Moreover, the assessments were frequently rushed, failing to allocate sufficient time to consult adequately with communities in order to gain a more than superficial analysis. In some locations, only the chiefs or local administrators were consulted, denying ordinary citizens the chance to have their voices heard. In addition, some communities may not have felt comfortable answering accurately, given the presence of DRC military, police and intelligence officials. Finally, we are concerned by reports that the central DRC government pressured local officials in some areas to change the data they had compiled in order to make the assessment more positive.

Recommendations to Improve the Joint Assessment

We urge you to take the following steps to improve the way joint assessments are conducted in the second and third phases:

- Data obtained from assessments that have suffered from the deficiencies outlined above should be reviewed and supplemented with more in-depth information and analysis on the protection and humanitarian issues in particular.

- Community members (women and men, IDPs and host communities, and the various ethnic groups present) should be systematically consulted as part of the joint assessment process. Established good practice should be observed to give all groups an opportunity to express themselves freely, including interviewing men and women separately, without the presence of security services, and with safeguards for confidentiality.
- The selection of communities to be consulted should ensure that a range of community interests is represented.
- Local civil society, NGOs, the Humanitarian Country Team and the UN Country Team should be systematically consulted as part of the joint assessments at the local/provincial level.
- The UN Country Team members participating in the joint assessments should also be given full opportunity to present analysis of the protection and humanitarian situation, which should be fully taken on board in the overall analysis.
- Assessments should be planned to allow adequate time to consult all relevant stakeholders in each location on their analysis of the situation.
- It should be made clear to the DRC government that the UN will not tolerate any attempts to alter the information obtained during the assessments.

The joint assessment has derived some important feedback from communities about the valuable role played by MONUSCO. We are confident that implementing the recommendations above will help to ensure a more effective joint assessment process. We urge you to use joint assessment reports based on reliable information from the community level to reconfigure MONUSCO in order to maximize the distribution of limited resources.

Finally, in addition to a thorough and effective joint assessment, it remains crucial for MONUSCO to improve its reporting on protection of civilians issues. We urge you to include in regular Secretary General reports clear data regarding civilians killed, raped, wounded, displaced and forcibly recruited and to detail the actions undertaken to mitigate these threats.

Yours sincerely,

Representatives of the following 64 NGOs

- **Organizations from DRC:**

AADH; Action de Promotion et d'Assistance pour l'Amélioration du Niveau de Vie des Population (APANAVIP); Action des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture au Nord Kivu (ACAT/North Kivu) ; Action Globale pour la promotion Sociale et la Paix ; AHDI ; Appuis aux Femmes Diminuées et Enfants Marginalisés (AFEDEM) ; APROSEM ; ASADHO ; Association des femmes ménagères pour le développement des personnes de 3ème âge (AFEMED) ; Association des Volontaires au Congo (ASVOCO) ; ASSODIP ; Blessed Aid ; CAFED ; Campagne pour la Paix ; Centre d'Appui pour le Développement Rural Communautaire (CADERCO) ; Centre de Promotion Socio-Sanitaire (CEPROSSAN) ; Centre de Recherche sur l'Environnement, la Démocratie et les Droits de l'Homme (CREDDHO) ; Centre d'Observation des Droits de l'Homme et d'Assistance Sociale (CODHAS) ; Centre pour la Paix et le Droits de l'Homme (CPDH) ; Coalition pour Mettre Fin à l'Utilisation des Enfants Soldats ; Collectif des Organisations des Jeunes Solidaires du Congo (COJESKI) – Kinshasa ; Conseil Régional des Organisations non Gouvernementales de Développement (CRONGD) - Nord Kivu ; Département Femme et Famille (DFF)/Eglise du Christ au Congo (ECC) - Nord Kivu ; Fondation

Mères Enfants (FME) ; Fondation Point de Vue des Jeunes Africains pour le Développement (FPJAD) ; Groupe Hirondelle ; Groupe Lotus ; Initiative Congolaise pour la Justice et Paix (ICJP) ; La Solidarité pour la Promotion Sociale et la Paix (SOPROP) ; l'Action Sociale pour la Paix et le Développement (ASPD) ; Les Héritiers de la Justice ; Ligue des Electeurs ; Ligue des Jeunes des Grands Lacs ; Marche Mondiale des Femmes ; Mouvement Congolais des Jeunes pour le Développement ; Mouvement des Assistance Sociaux (MAS) ; Promotion de la Démocratie et de Protection des Droits Humains (PDH) ; Réseau des Associations des Droits de l'Homme (RADHOSKI) - Sud Kivu ; Réseau d'Initiatives locales pour le Développement durable (REID) ; Réseau Provincial des Organisations de Défense des Droits de l'Homme au Congo (REPRODHOC) ; Solidarité des Volontaires pour l'Humanité (SVH) - Baraka, South Kivu ; Solidarité Féminine pour la Paix et le Développement Intégral (SOFEPADI) ; Synergie des Femmes pour les violences Sexuelles (SFVS) ; Union d'Actions pour les Initiatives du Développement (UAID) ; Union de Familles pour la Recherche de la Paix (UFAREP) ; Union des jeunes ressortissant du Sud-Kivu pour le développement (UJRSD) ; Village Cobaye (VICO) ; Voix de sans Voix ni Liberté (VOVOLIB)

- **International Organizations:**

Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network (AEFJN) ; Aide Médicale Internationale (AMI); Bonn International Centre for Conversion (BICC); Catholic Overseas development Agency (CAFOD); Global Center for the Responsibility to Protect (GCR2P); International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ); International Federation for Human rights (FIDH); International Rescue Committee (IRC) ; Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC); Organisation pour la Défense des Droits de l'Enfant (ODDE) International; Oxfam International; Pax Christi (German Section); Première Urgence ; Refugees International (RI); Secours Catholique – Caritas France; Witness.

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