



## **Democratic Republic of the Congo – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 19 October 2011**

### **Information on violence in Masisi (North Kivu - DRC) in June/July 2010.**

A *UN News Service* report on an incident in North Kivu in May 2010 states:

“As soon as the Indian patrol saw the army troops under attack in North Kivu, scene of years of fighting between the Government and an array of rebel groups, it went to their aid, according to a press release issued by the peacekeeping force, known as MONUC. The soldier was wounded in the exchange of fire and taken to hospital in Goma, the provincial capital, where he later died, the 31st blue helmet in the 11-year history of MONUC to die under enemy fire. A Congolese soldier and a civilian were also killed and three soldiers and one civilian wounded.” (UN News Service (24 May 2010) *Congo-Kinshasa: UN Peacekeeper Killed in Clash in East*)

A *Missionary Service News Agency* report on fighting in North Kivu in June 2010 states:

“At least 19 people were killed in an attack on Wednesday [2 June] night against a base of the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) in Burungu, around 40km from Goma, capital of the north-eastern North Kivu province. The attack was initially attributed to a group of around 150 combatants of the 'Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda' (FDLR), a rebel group that rejected a peace accord reached with armed groups in east DR-Congo. The attack was later claimed by a new militia that calls itself the Front for the Liberation of Congo (FPLC). Heavy artillery exchanges also continued yesterday in four villages of the Masisi territory - Kahembe, Kabale, Mukobirwe and Musumba - with serious material damages to public buildings, including schools and churches, and infrastructure of the local United Nations mission (MONUC) base in Ngenge.” (Missionary Service News Agency (Misna) (5 June 2010) *Nineteen killed in fighting eastern DR Congo*)

The Introduction to a fact-finding mission report from the *UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights* states:

“From 30 July to 2 August 2010, a coalition of combatants of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and the Mayi Mayi Sheka as well as residual elements of Lieutenant Colonel Emmanuel Nsengiyumva, a group composed of at least 200 fighters, systematically attacked civilians in 13 villages situated along the Kibua-Mpofi axis in the groupement of Ihana, Wanianga sector, Walikale territory, North Kivu province. The assailants looted most of these villages, raped hundreds of civilians, mostly women, but also men and children, and abducted more than hundred people who were subjected to forced labour.” (UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (July 2011) *Final Report of the Fact-Finding Missions of the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office into the Mass Rapes and Other Human Rights Violations Committed by a Coalition of Armed Groups along the Kibua-Mpofi Axis in Walikale Territory, North Kivu, from 30 July to 2 August 2010*, p.6)

An *International Crisis Group* report, in a section titled “Cost of military failure for the population”, states:

“In North Kivu, between 30 July and 2 August, FDLR elements associated with the Mayi Mayi Cheka took control of fifteen villages in the Luvungi area, in Walikale territory. Without firing a shot, and without interruption from MONUSCO patrols, they carried out a planned and methodical campaign of sexual violence against at least 250 villagers. On 13 August, the FDLR burned 350 houses near to Ntoto, 70km from Walikale town, and captured some civilians as porters.” (International Crisis Group (16 November 2010) *Congo: No Stability in Kivu Despite a Rapprochement With Rwanda*, p.9)

The Introduction to a report published by *Amnesty International* states:

“During four terrible days in July and August 2010, more than 300 women, girls, men and boys were raped by armed men in Walikale Territory, North Kivu. The assailants were armed with guns, grenades and machetes. The survivors were left in pain, without their belongings and in a state of shock. They were stripped of absolutely everything: their physical and mental health, their means of livelihood and their sense of security. The mass rapes took place within 30km of a UN peacekeepers’ base, where a company of 80 blue helmet troops was stationed. For years, the civilian population of North Kivu has suffered as Congolese and foreign armed groups and armies fight for control of the area’s mineral wealth, land and resources. Grave human rights violations, including war crimes and crimes against humanity, have been committed by armed groups and in some cases, by members of the national army (Forces Armées en République Démocratique du Congo, FARDC). The mass rapes committed in July and August were planned and organized. Women, men and children were rounded up and prevented from fleeing before being raped by armed group fighters acting under the orders of their commanding officers. The armed groups sought to impose their authority over villages through terror and humiliation, to maintain control over territory and to advance their political agendas. While the responsibility for the attack in Walikale lies primarily with the armed groups, the national army failed to prevent the attacks and protect the population.” (Amnesty International (December 2010) *Mass Rapes in Walikale: Still a Need for Protection and Justice in Eastern Congo*, p.5)

In a section titled “What Exactly Happened in Walikale?” this report states:

“The armed groups accused of being responsible for the mass rapes have operated jointly since June 2010 in Walikale territory and have reportedly been attacking civilians since July. The coalition, estimated at around 200 combatants, is composed of a faction of the FDLR, a Mayi-Mayi group led by ‘Colonel’ Sheka Ntabo Taberi, and some former CNDP combatants led by ‘Colonel’ Emmanuel Nsengiyumva who deserted the national army earlier in the year.” (ibid, p.8)

This section of the report also states:

“UN investigators report that over 303 people were raped and 946 homes were looted, leaving people with nothing but the clothes they were wearing when were attacked. An additional 116 people were reportedly abducted and forced to transport the looted goods; some of them were beaten or whipped.” (ibid, p.10)

A map of North Kivu is enclosed with this response for reference purposes.

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

### References:

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UN World Health Organization (November 2008) *Map of North Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo*

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