



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

DRC - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Tuesday 29 August 2017

Information on the current security situation

In June 2017 the *United Nations Security Council* states in a report that:

“The major shift observed over the first three months of 2017 across the security landscape of the country persisted during the reporting period, as violence and threats to civilians continued to spread in the west, and instability continued to prevail in the east. In the western Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly in the three Kasai provinces, in addition to clashes between the Kamuina Nsapu militia and security forces — which resulted in numerous human rights violations, including targeted killings by the militia as well as summary executions and acts of rape perpetrated by security forces, as described in paragraphs 39-45 and 49 below, there was an increase in violence among ethnic communities. Foreign and Congolese armed groups remained active in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, mostly in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri. Insecurity also persisted in the border areas, specifically along the borders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with Angola, the Central African Republic and South Sudan” (United Nations Security Council (30 June 2017) *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (June 2017)*).

A report issued in July 2017 by *BBC News* states that:

“An estimated 850,000 children have been forced to flee fighting in the Democratic Republic of Congo's Kasai provinces, the UN's children's agency Unicef says...Fighting broke out in Kasai in August 2016 after a traditional leader was killed in clashes with security forces” (BBC News (28 July 2017) *DR Congo Kasai violence displaces 850,000 children*).

The *United Nations Security Council* in August 2017 states that:

“...the Kasais have witnessed a stark escalation of violence, other areas remain affected by chronic levels of insecurity” (United Nations Security Council (10 August 2017) *Final report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo*).

In August 2017 the *Norwegian Refugee Council* states in a report that:

“Clashes between the country's military and armed groups loyal to Kamuina Nsapu, a local leader reportedly assassinated by government forces, have been taking place in Kasai, Kasai Central, Kasai Oriental, Lomami and Sankuru provinces since August 2016. The conflict, which now affects eight of the country's 26 provinces and has caused thousands of casualties, has intensified in 2017. Kasai is the worst-affected province, hosting 1.44 million IDPs as of July, while Kasai Central hosts more than 670,000” (Norwegian Refugee Council (16 August 2017) *Internal Displacement in 2017 - Provisional Mid-Year Figures [Democratic Republic of the Congo excerpt]*).

Reuters issued a report in August 2017

“More than 50 people have been killed in clashes between ethnic groups in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, three local aid workers said on Sunday, the largest death toll in fighting between the two groups for months. Violence has raged across much of Congo this year, killing hundreds and displacing millions amid a political crisis caused by President Joseph Kabila's refusal to step down when his constitutional mandate expired in December” (Reuters (6 August 2017) *Dozens killed in ethnic violence in eastern Congo*).

In August 2017 *Voice of America* states in a report that:

“Police in the Democratic Republic of Congo say at least 12 people were killed during clashes between police and members of separatist sect Bundu dia Mayala in the capital Kinshasa...Last week, U.N. human rights investigators issued a report documenting the killings of more than 250 people, including 62 children, in violence in central Congo over three recent months. U.N. human rights chief Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein said the violence could devolve into "wider ethnic cleansing." “ (Voice of America (7 August 2017) *14 Killed in DRC Clashes*).

IRIN News in August 2017 notes that:

“Militia attacks and army reprisals have uprooted 1.4 million people in a previously stable region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The conflict has helped double the number of displaced people in the country in the year to June. The Catholic Church reports killings of over 3,000, amidst UN reports of mass graves and widespread abuse of civilians” (IRIN News (15 August 2017) *The conflict in Kasai, DRC*).

This report also states that:

“Since August 2016, 1.4 million inhabitants of Grand Kasai-which encompasses five of the DRC's 26 provinces-have been forced from their homes, escaping violence perpetrated by a variety of militias and the Congolese government. 850,000 children are among them, according to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), and nearly one million people have been displaced during the course of this year” (ibid).

A report issued in August 2017 by the *Norwegian Refugee Council* states that:

“Severe violence has emerged in the impoverished Kasai region since one of the main chiefs, Jean-Pierre Pandi, was killed in a confrontation with the government last year...The increasing violence and displacement in the region have resulted in two lost harvests, exacerbating food insecurity in the country. FAO and WFP reported in August that 7.7 million people are now on the verge of starvation...The crisis in the Kasai is now the country's most severe. In July, the UN Human Rights Office warned that the conflict had taken on "an increasing and disturbing ethnic dimension." “ (Norwegian Refugee Council (25 August 2017) *Kasai: On the brink of a humanitarian catastrophe*).

A report released in October 2017 by *Business Monitor International* states that:

“The government forces are unable to control the northern and eastern border regions, which remain rife with conflict” (Business Monitor International (1 October 2017) *Congo (DRC) - Q4 2017*).

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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.

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