



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)  
LEGAL AID BOARD

**DRC - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Thursday 1 December 2016**

## **Information on a protest at the election office in Kinshasa on 19 September 2016**

A document issued by the *International Crisis Group* in October 2016 notes:

“On 19 September, when the electoral process should have started, the opposition held a protest march that continued for two days despite violence from the start. The UN Human Rights Council estimated the toll at 53 dead and over 100 wounded...” (International Crisis Group (13 October 2016) *Boulevard of Broken Dreams: The “Street” and Politics in DR Congo*, p.3).

In October 2016 the *United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO)* *MONUSCO-OHCHR* states in a report that:

“Between 19 and 21 September 2016, the UNJHRO documented over 422 victims of human rights violations in Kinshasa by State agents. In total, the UNJHRO was able to confirm that at least 53 persons, including seven women, two children, and four police agents, were killed. Forty-eight were killed by State actors, while the rest of the perpetrators were not clearly identified. One hundred and forty-three persons, including 13 women and 11 children were injured, of which 75 by State actors and 68 by unidentified perpetrators; and more than 299 people were unlawfully arrested and detained. Violations of the right to freedom of the press, including the arrest of eight journalists, as well as destruction of property including premises belonging to political parties, police stations and shops, have also been documented. These violations resulted in further restricting the enjoyment of civil and political rights in the country” (United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) *MONUSCO-OHCHR* (7 October 2016) *Preliminary investigation report on human rights violations and violence perpetrated during demonstrations in Kinshasa between 19 and 21 September 2016*, p.1).

The *United Nations Security Council* in October 2016 notes:

“On 19 September, opposition supporters held demonstrations in several cities across the Democratic Republic of the Congo, following calls by the Rassemblement for the holding of elections in November and demanding that the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo step down by 19 December. Demonstrations in Kinshasa deteriorated into violence, with the police firing live ammunition and tear gas at demonstrators who reportedly tried to divert from the agreed itinerary and pelted stones at the police. The headquarters of several political parties affiliated with the Majorité présidentielle, including a local headquarters of the Parti du peuple pour la reconstruction et la démocratie, the President's party, were set ablaze. According to investigations conducted by MONUSCO, at least 49 people, including at least one police officer, were killed and 127 people were injured, while security forces arrested approximately 299 demonstrators, journalists and human rights defenders across the country. On 20 September in Kinshasa, the headquarters of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social, the Mouvement de libération du Congo and the Forces novatrices pour l'union et la solidarité were attacked. Three people were killed and six were wounded when the headquarters of the Union pour la démocratie et le

progrès social was set ablaze. Two government buildings were also reportedly vandalized and set ablaze.” (United Nations Security Council (3 October 2016) *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (October 2016)*).

In September 2016 *Agence France-Presse* states:

“Police in DR Congo said Wednesday that 32 people had been killed during two days of clashes in the capital Kinshasa this week, while the opposition said more than three times that number had died. The wildly divergent figures were released as security forces brought the wave of violence and looting to an end” (*Agence France-Presse (22 September 2016) DR Congo unrest ends with official death toll at 32*).

A report issued in September 2016 by *Amnesty International* notes:

“The authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) must show restraint in their handling of protests to ensure that they do not inflame tensions in the country, and conduct thorough, prompt, impartial and transparent investigations into killings and violence that took place at opposition rallies in Kinshasa yesterday, Amnesty International said today. The government has said 17 people, including three police officers, were killed at rallies held to demand that the electoral commission announce the date of the next presidential election, while the opposition parties put the death toll at more than 50 protesters. Credible civil society reports mention 25 deaths, including the three police officers” (*Amnesty International (20 September 2016) DRC: Authorities must not fan the flames of unrest with violence*).

No further information on this issue could be found among sources available to the RDC.

## References

Agence France-Presse (22 September 2016) *DR Congo unrest ends with official death toll at 32*  
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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.

### **Sources Consulted**

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