

FAST Update

DRC/Kivu region

Semi-annual Risk Assessment
June to November 2005

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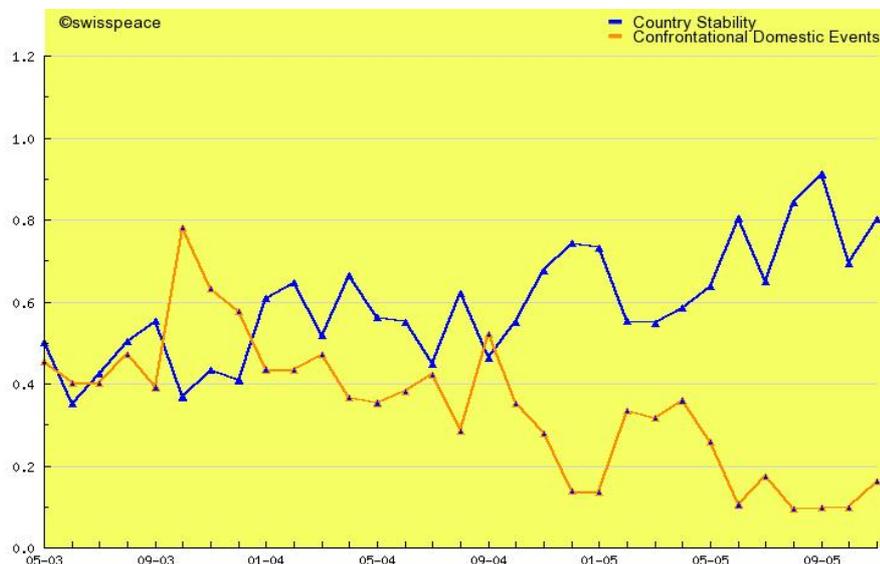
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Country Stability and Confrontational Domestic Events (relative)



Average number of reported events per month: 111

Indicator description: see appendix

Risk Assessment:

- Despite sharp monthly variations, the overall trend since April is one of greater Country Stability. Although the potential for confrontation between armed groups and government forces remains high, civil violence has tapered off significantly. This generally encouraging conjuncture is graphically illustrated by the divergent paths of the Country Stability and Domestic Confrontation curves above.
- The general improvement in the situation was acknowledged by the UN Security Council mission in the statement concluding their visit to the Great Lakes, from 4-12 November, "We are profoundly impressed with the positive developments, particularly in the DRC and Burundi. Relations between countries in the region are also encouraging".
- The peace process hinges to a large extent on the outcome of the national elections – now to be held before end June 2006. Though much remains to be done to insure a safe passage to multiparty democracy, the record is by no means barren: a new constitution has been adopted by parliament, to be submitted to a referendum on 18 December; an electoral law has been drafted which will soon be sent to parliament; the law on citizenship, a crucial element of the new dispensation, has been adopted, and a start to the reintegration of Congolese armed forces made. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) deserves considerable credit for completing voter registration, despite major logistical problems, during which some 22 million have already been registered of an estimated electorate of 28 million. Cases of fraud, however, have been reported, mostly in Kinshasa. Major steps have been taken, in collaboration with European donors and South Africa, to beef up the capabilities of the nascent Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC), and renewed efforts have been made to bring under control the largest and most threatening of foreign militias operating in eastern Congo, the pro-Hutu Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda (FDLR), whose core group consists of ex-Forces Armées Rwandaises (FAR) elements and Interahamwe, and their offspring.
- Although there are still many hurdles to overcome, the peace process is in better shape today than at any other time since the signing of the 2002 Global and All-Inclusive Agreement, which marked the birth of the present transitional government. One of the more positive signs on the horizon has been the pro-active stance of the UN Security Council in addressing the issue of armed groups in eastern Congo. The imposition of international sanctions on foreign militias, including the FDLR, as well as the dissident Banyamulenge (ethnic Tutsi) officers, Jules Mutebutsi and Laurent Nkunda, constitutes a major breakthrough in the search for a

peaceful solution to the crisis. It is doubtful, however, that the FDLR will be brought under control before the 2006 elections, despite the moderate FDLR leader's promises in March that they were willing to lay down their arms and return to Rwanda, in return for certain guarantees. These failed to materialize, in part because of the obduracy of local FDLR hard-liners, and Rwanda's refusal to recognize the FDLR as a legitimate political opposition. Thus far only a fraction of the FDLR has been disarmed. Nonetheless, joint operations launched recently by UN and government troops against rebel positions that have resulted in the capture of some FDLR and Mai-Mai fighters, are seen as a significant first step to actively implement the government ultimatum of 30 September for combatants to leave or be forced out of the country.

- Future stability will crucially depend on security sector reform. Unless minimal conditions of security obtain during the electoral campaign – scheduled to start in early 2006 – the peace process will remain at risk. Perhaps no other factor will have a greater impact on future stability than the effective implementation of the National Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration Plan (PNDDR). This is where the joint efforts of the international community and the transitional authorities in the reconstruction of a national army are likely to have their greatest pay-off.

Confrontational Non-Government and Government Events (relative)



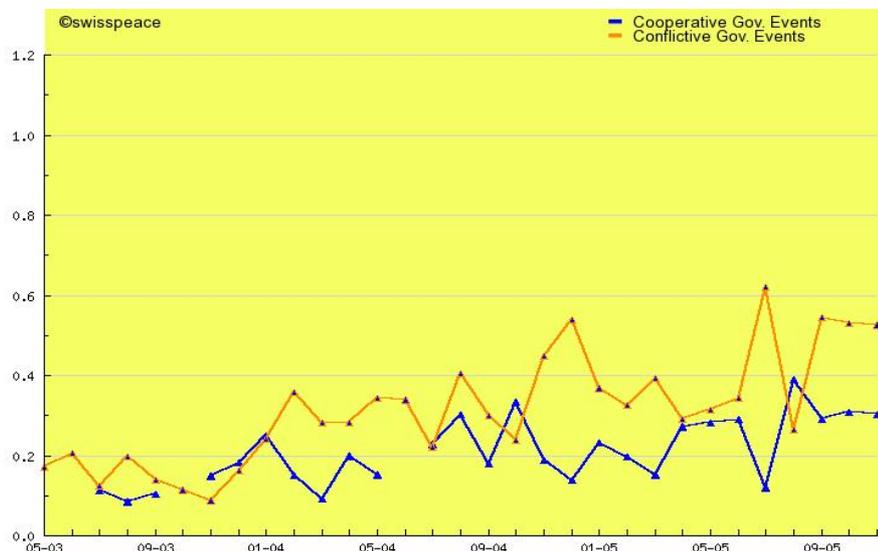
Average number of reported events per month: 111
Indicator description: see appendix

Risk Assessment:

- Except for the sharp resurgence of government-inspired confrontations in July and September, there has been a notable decline in levels of Non-Government and Government Confrontation. There is reason for concern, however, when one considers the number of armed groups and militias operating in eastern DRC. Most of them have yet to be disarmed. The most threatening is the FDLR, with "branches" in North and South Kivu, in Walungu, Kilungutwe, Buniakiri, and elsewhere along the Ruzizi. The atrocities committed against civilians by FDLR rebels were extensively documented in a MONUC report of May 2005, which refers to "hundreds of summary executions, rapes, beatings and hostage-taking of Congolese civilians in the territory of Walungu" (Irin report, May 19, 2005, "Rwandan rebels abuse Congolese civilians").
- No less serious is the potential threat arising from the Rwanda-linked, pro-RCD (Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie) militias led by Laurent Nkunda and Jules Mutebutsi, although in October some 47 officers and soldiers of the Mutebutsi faction were reportedly captured in the vicinity of Bukavu. Hundreds more are still at large.
- North and South Kivu are not the only provinces affected by banditry and mayhem. Ituri, in the northeast, was the scene of a serious clash in September between armed militias and government troops in charge of security in the Bambu Gold Mines, causing some 5,000 civilians to flee their villages. Ituri is home to a large number of armed groups, some indigenous to the province, others originating from Uganda, the Sudan or Rwanda. In addition to the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU), both of which have had rear bases in the DRC for years, the largest of such foreign groups are the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) rebels, said to number about 1,000. It remains unclear whether there is truth to the rumour that 400 of them that entered the region in October had been forced back across the border to Sudan. While the Mai-Mai militias are found in many parts of eastern Congo, some of the most anarchic and violent are reported to be still operating in north Katanga. Recent reports indicate that some 60,000 people fled their homelands in north Katanga in late November, following violent clashes between the FARDC and Mai-Mai militia units resisting demobilization.
- The incorporation of former rebels, whether of the Mutebutsi/Nkunda or FDLR or Mai-Mai variety, into the FARDC, also raises the question of how to ensure the loyalty of an army that comprises a large number of former renegades from so many different factions.

- Given that the Congolese state lacks the military capability to bring the many rebel factions under effective control, much of the burden of "pacification", disarmament and reinsertion has fallen to the MONUC. It deserves full credit for disarming as many as 11,000 rebels belonging to any of the six different factions, and for the search and destroy operations conducted in and around Walungu. In the Kivu region, however, the "clean-up" of rebel strongholds has only just begun. The problem lies in part in the modest size of the MONUC relative to the number of rebel forces, in part in the difficulty of access to their rear bases, scattered over a large expanse of territory, in part to their extreme fluidity and fragmentation. In addition to the FDLR and Nkunda/Mutebutsi militias, there are (a) the Itombwe-based and predominantly Banyamulenge rebel faction, once under the command of Cdt. Musunzu; (b) the Serufuli militias, nominally under the control of the Governor of North Kivu, Serufuli, which are composed of Magrivi and Mongol elements drawn from factions of the same names; (c) the Local Defence Forces (LDF) organized by Serufuli along the lines of the Rwandan LDF, a sort of constabulary operating hand in hand with local civilian and military authorities; (d) a mixed bag of RCD and Rwandan troops concentrated near Kanyabayonga, on the border with Rwanda, which has yet to be integrated into the FARDC; and (e) those Mai-Mai factions which are resisting incorporation into the FARDC. One could also point to the deep fissures that run through the FDLR, pitting moderates against moderates, the Commandement militaire pour le changement against the so-called Rastas, the Sant' Egidio peace negotiators against hard-core local commanders. The overall picture is one of endless fractionalization, incessant bickerings, tactical alliances and recalculation of costs and benefits.
- What the line-up of local factions will look like when the electoral campaign gets under way, whether they can remain neutral while the voting goes on, and what their reaction may be to the outcome of the elections, is anybody's guess. What seems reasonably clear, however, is that much remains to be done before tens of thousands of former rebels can be converted into loyal professional soldiers.

Cooperative and Confictive Government Events (relative)



Average number of reported events per month: 111
 Indicator description: see appendix

Risk Assessment:

- On a number of issues the DRC government has demonstrated its willingness to cooperate, but there are limits to how far cooperation can be expected when dealing with recalcitrant disarmament and restructuring of the armed forces.
- One of the most encouraging signs of cooperation has been the court-martial hearing, in the Equateur province in July, of 12 soldiers accused of rape, following an investigation by the MONUC's human rights section. All of the accused soldiers are said to be former combatants of the Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo (MLC). According to MONUC's head of the public information section, "rape is for the first time charged as a crime against humanity".
- After some 230,000 public school teachers went on strike on 5 September, following several rounds of negotiations with the Teachers' union, the Syndicat des Enseignants Congolais (SYECO), the government finally agreed to their demands of salary increases.
- As anticipated by the Plan Stratégique National pour l'Intégration des Forces Armées (July 2005), a total of nine infantry brigades are in the process of being trained. The 4th and 5th brigades have completed their training at Mushakali and Nyaleke, and others are expected to undergo similar training in any of the six so-called brassage centers, i.e. sites for intermixing and training eligible recruits into the army.
- On the all-important issue of DDR the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration, or CONADER, has yet to play an active role in setting up orientation and brassage centers, owing to its limited capacities. But this did not prevent it from cooperating fully with the members of the Contact Group (essentially consisting of Belgium, France, UK and US) and the Structure for Military Integration (SMI), in providing training and logistical support to units of the FARDC in eastern Congo.
- The reintegration process is proceeding at a very slow pace. Very few reintegration projects are operational, and most of the former rebels who agreed to lay down their arms lack the qualifications to hold a job. One militiaman tersely summed up the key problem facing DDR: "It is very difficult for us to survive without guns. The movement was our income. Now they have to give us jobs".
- Although the MONUC expects the FARDC to eventually take on the FDLR, its effectiveness as a fighting force has yet to be tested against hard-core Hutu militias. Joint operations look more promising: on 9 November,

"up to 336 armed men surrendered to UN and government troops", mostly consisting of Hutu rebels and "other illegal armed groups". The FDLR are not the only challenge facing the FARDC. How to prevent the newly integrated militias from deserting the army to join their former patrons remains a major problem.

- Another key problem concerns the undiminished levels of corruption within the military. Of the US\$ 8 million disbursed each month by the Central Bank to pay soldiers' salaries, only a fraction reaches its destination. A recent census shows that the salaries of some 100.000 "ghost soldiers" are being cashed in every month, presumably by the army high command. The consequences of such corrupt practices were dramatically illustrated during the military campaign launched against pro-Rwandan rebels last December: it is estimated that some US\$ 10 million worth of supplies simply vanished, causing the troops, unpaid and unfed, to go on rampage, looting and raping.
- While significant progress has been made towards the creation of a national army, its loyalty to the Congolese state, such as it is, remains to be seen. Notwithstanding the continuing high level of cooperation between the Ministry of Defence and the international community, within the military cooperation is more problematic. Here the real issue is less one of cooperation vs. conflict, as to figure out who is cooperating with whom, where, and why. The pull of ethnic and regional ties may lead to cooperation with the "wrong" party. Among the hundreds or thousands of "deserters" from the FARDC many are former Mai-Mai, or RCD soldiers. For those militias who for years have known no other source of authority than their local commanders, conscription into the army is no easy retooling. Many have already voted with their feet, others may follow suit. The presence of MONUC troops on the ground offers the best hope for maintaining minimal security conditions during the electoral campaign.

Cooperative and Conflictive International Events (average weighted)



Average number of reported events per month: 96

Indicator description: see appendix

Risk Assessment:

- Whereas the balance of conflict and cooperation at the regional level shows rather more conflict than cooperation, at the level of the international community – here meaning the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU) and the UN – there has been sustained cooperation with the DRC authorities. For this, due credit is owed to the Comité International d'Accompagnement de la Transition (CIAT) and the proactive attitude of its chairman, Ambassador William Swing.
- Bilateral cooperation between Rwanda and the DRC has been institutionalized through the so-called Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM), a bilateral arrangement established in September 2002. The JVM played a useful role in helping defuse the conflict between Rwanda and the DRC in December 2004, and has provided a forum to air disagreements over common border violations. It has yet to overcome, however, the key stumbling block in the normalization of relations between Kigali and Kinshasa: while the former insists on the security threats posed by the FDLR, and the complacent attitude of the transitional government in the face of such threats, the latter accuses Rwanda of having made every effort to give appropriate logistical help to Laurent Nkunda and Mutebutsi as they prepared to launch their assault on Bukavu in June 2004. In December 2004, as elements of the Rwandan army were reported on Congolese territory, the DRC roving ambassador, Antoine Ghonda, did not hesitate to say that the invading troops under the command of General Nkunda, were "heavily equipped by Rwanda".
- Following the news, in late September, that some 400 Ugandan rebels of the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) had entered the DRC from the Sudan, a broader, ad hoc consultative mechanism was put in place to deal with the crisis, the so-called Tripartite Plus One Commission, involving representatives from Uganda, Rwanda, the DRC and Burundi as an observer. This paved the way for the meeting on 21 October in Kampala of the foreign ministers and security officials of the four countries, where agreement was reached on the need to impose international sanctions against all armed groups in eastern Congo. On November 1, the UN Security Council responded to this request by passing Resolution 8546, authorizing international sanctions against a number of individuals and entities in violation of the UN arms embargo and other illegal activities in eastern DRC.
- Initially scheduled for 15-17 December, in Nairobi, the Africa's Great Lakes conference -- the second in a series of "summit" conferences on the region attended by the foreign ministers of the region -- was abruptly cancelled -- for reasons that have yet to be clarified. It is widely assumed, however, that President Kabila's decision not to attend, because of the impending referendum on the constitution, was the principal reason for cancelling the meeting.

- The several initiatives designed to facilitate cooperation at the regional level are reasons for optimism. More intransigent problems have to do with the huge political void stretching across much of eastern Congo, home to a large number of armed militias whose capacity to survive and proliferate is a commentary on the absence of anything resembling a state authority. As recently as July, large quantities of arms were reported to be flowing into the region– with companies from the UK, Israel, South Africa, the US and Eastern Europe among those involved in arms sales to one faction or the other. The same phenomenon helps explain the remarkable ease with which external actors – notably Rwanda and Uganda – can manipulate local factions to their advantage, and in the process reap enormous economic benefits.
- Whether the MONUC can play the role of a surrogate state, and thus maintain a modicum of peace and order at the polls and effectively protect Congolese citizens during the electoral campaign, is doubtful. If the transition to multiparty democracy is not to end up in yet another failed experiment, a major effort will be required on the part of the international community and the DRC government to strengthen the capabilities and professionalism of the FARDC. Whether at this late stage the armed forces can be effectively prevented from becoming a participant in the electoral struggle, remains to be seen.

Appendix: Description of indicators used | Page 11

Country Stability	The Country Stability index reflects three independent factors: (i) challenges by non-government actors to the state's monopoly of force; (ii) state repression; and (iii) violence entailing physical force against persons or property. The index is scaled between 0 and 1, where 1 means high and 0 low stability.
Confrontational Events (relative)	Number of Events (i) that are of confrontational nature such as 'Threaten', 'Demonstrate', 'Reduce relationships', 'Expel', 'Seize' and 'Force' divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.
Confrontational Non-Government Events (relative)	Number of Events (i) that have a negative value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* and (ii) where at least one Initiator is a non-government actor divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has range between 0 and 1.
Confrontational Government Events (relative)	Number of Events (i) that are of confrontational nature such as 'Threaten', 'Demonstrate', 'Reduce relationships', 'Expel', 'Seize', and 'Force', and (ii) where at least one Initiator is a government actor, divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.
Conflictive Government Events (relative)	Number of Events (i) that have a negative value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* and (ii) where at least one Initiator is a government actor, divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.
Cooperative Government Events (relative)	Number of Events (i) that have a positive value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* and (ii) where at least one Initiator is a government actor divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.
Conflictive International Events (average weighted)	Based on the IDEA cooperation-conflict scale: Average weight of Events (i) that have a negative value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* and (ii) where at least one actor comes from outside the country. The Indicator has a range between -13 and 8.
Cooperative International Events (average weighted)	Based on the IDEA cooperation-conflict scale: Average weight of Events (i) that have a positive value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* and (ii) where at least one actor comes from outside the country. The Indicator has a range between -13 and 8.

* The IDEA cooperation-conflict scale is a general weighting that attaches a weight to every event. The scale has a range from -13 to +8. Event types that are regarded as cooperative have positive values, conflictive event types have negative values.

Who are we?

FAST International is the early warning program of swisspeace, based in Bern, Switzerland. The program is funded and utilized by an international consortium of development agencies consisting of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

What do we want to achieve?

FAST International aims at enhancing political decision makers' and their offices' ability to identify critical developments in a timely manner so that coherent political strategies can be formulated to either prevent or limit destructive effects of violent conflict or identify windows of opportunity for peacebuilding.

How do we work?

FAST International uses both qualitative and quantitative methods, with the combination of methods being determined in each case by customer needs. The centerpiece of FAST International is the collection of single cooperative and conflictive events by means of a web-based software, applied by local staff using a coding scheme called IDEA (Integrated Data for Event Analysis), which is based on the WEIS (World Interaction Survey) coding scheme. The monitoring by FAST International is done independently from Western media coverage, thus providing for a constant influx of information. This information is collected by FAST International's own Local Information Networks (LINs). The quantitative empirical analysis is based on composed indicators developed within the IDEA framework. Since even the most profound quantitative analysis requires interpretation, FAST International cooperates with renowned country/area experts.

What are our products?

FAST International offers different early warning products tailored to customer needs. The only standard product available to the general public is the FAST Update, which provides the reader with an overview of developments on a semi-annual basis. It consists of three to five tension barometers (graphs), displaying cooperative and conflictive developments, which are analyzed by FAST's country/area experts on the basis of specific indicators. Whenever major changes occur in one of the countries or regions under scrutiny, FAST releases Special Updates, which follow the structure of the regular FAST Updates. FAST Updates are available in either hard copy, in electronic form on the respective country page or by subscription.

Which countries do we currently monitor?

Africa: Angola, Burundi, DRC/Kivu region, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia
Asia: Afghanistan, India/Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
Europe: Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Russian Federation/North Caucasus region