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Cabinet of the
Democratic Republic of the Congo

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A Note on the Simulation

This committee will simulate the decisions of the cabinet of the Democratic Republic of the Congo of the present day. The cabinet of our committee will have certain differences from the actual cabinet, most notably; the four vice-presidents that are the hallmark of the Congolese cabinet will not be represented. Furthermore, in order to streamline decision-making, executive authority will reside in the President, who will be represented by the chair of the committee.

All delegates in the committee have been assigned positions corresponding to an actual position on the Cabinet. Keep in mind that you will not be expected to represent the actual individual holding this position. Your objective should be to use your own knowledge and judgment to further Congolese national interest.

Consequently, before the conference, please familiarize yourself with the current state of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Use this background guide as a foundation for your research. Many of the sources in the footnotes will provide useful details (the State Department Background Note on the region, in particular, is a great starting point). Keep up on news developments on the region, and make sure to research the topics associated with your position. The Minister of Defense, to use an obvious example, should be an expert on the capabilities of the Congolese military and the security threats it must address. The chair realizes that some positions are more obscure and will be harder to research, nevertheless, try to learn as much as possible about your area of expertise.

I: Basic Information¹:

President: Joseph Kabila

Population: 58,317,930

Capital: Kinshasa

Life expectancy: 49.14 years

HIV/AIDS prevalence rate: 4.2%

GDP: \$40.05 billion (2004 est.)

GDP per capita: \$700 (2004 est.)

Foreign Aid: \$195.3 million (1995)



II: Recent History²

In 1965, the commander-in-chief of the national army (Mobutu Sese Seko) took control of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He renamed the DRC the Republic of Zaire, and consolidated his power over the country. By 1990, however, Mobutu was weakened by domestic political protests, international criticism, and economic problems. As a result, he agreed in principle to democratic reforms, such as the creation of a multi-party electoral system. But as concrete reforms failed to materialize, internal political turmoil grew.

The internal political problems in Zaire were exacerbated by a growing crisis in Central Africa. In 1996, as the war in Rwanda raged, Hutu forces fighting against the Tutsi-led Rwandan government established bases in eastern Zaire. Consequently, Rwandan government troops entered Zaire. At the same time, an armed group under Laurent-Desire Kabila (called the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire, or AFDL), began a military campaign with the objective of overthrowing the Mobutu government. By 1997, Mobutu fled the country, and Kabila’s forces entered Kinshasa.

Kabila assumed control of the country and restored its name to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Although Kabila’s movement was backed initially by Rwanda, problems soon arose between the two governments. Kabila ordered foreign troops to leave the DRC in 1998, and when most refused, fighting broke out. Rwandan troops began a campaign

¹ General information from the CIA World Factbook: Democratic Republic of the Congo (January 2005): <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/cg.html>.

Map from the Official Web Site of the Mission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the UN: <http://www.un.int/drcongo/map>

² Historical information from the US Department of State Background Note: Democratic Republic of the Congo (January 2005):

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.htm>

to oust Kabila, but the intervention of Angolan, Zimbabwean, and Namibian troops prevented the campaign from being a success. Nevertheless, Rwandan troops (along with an associated rebel group—the Congolese Rally for Democracy or RCD) withdrew to the east, where they continued to fight the Congolese army and its allies.

The DRC was divided even further when a rebel group known as the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (MLC), backed by Uganda, gained control of the northern regions of the country. The three segments had reached a military stalemate by 1999, when a cease-fire was signed in Lusaka, Zambia. The Lusaka Accord, in addition to establishing a cease-fire, called for the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force (MONUC), the withdrawal of foreign troops, and the formation of a transitional government leading to elections.

Progress toward many of the provisions agreed on in Lusaka was difficult, but political affairs in the DRC soon changed dramatically. In 2001, Laurent Kabila was assassinated. His son, Joseph Kabila, assumed control of the government. Under Joseph Kabila, MONUC was allowed to deploy throughout the country, and foreign troops soon withdrew.

By 2002, talks in South Africa led to a comprehensive power-sharing agreement between many conflicting factions within Congolese politics. A transitional government was created, and four vice presidents, all representing different factions, were given power. The transitional government assumed office in 2003, and elections are scheduled for 2005.

III: Economy³

Agriculture is the foundation of the Congolese economy, with major cash crops consisting of coffee, rubber, cotton, sugar, tea, and cocoa. Industry accounts for a relatively small proportion of the DRC's GDP. Mining is an important industry, with diamonds, copper, and cobalt all major exports.

But despite significant natural resources, the DRC remains one of the world's poorest countries. Under Joseph Kabila, however, economic reforms are being put into place. Through cooperation with the International Monetary Fund, the DRC has adopted more disciplined fiscal and monetary policies, which have reduced inflation. In addition, donor nations are funding development projects in addition to humanitarian initiatives. The DRC has also been recognized as a Highly Indebted Poor Country by the Paris Club, which should facilitate debt relief.

Further economic reforms have centered around making the country more attractive to foreign investment, through measures like establishing a new investment code and a new commercial court. The World Bank is also facilitating the restructuring of major state-owned enterprises, especially in the mining sector. It is hoped that these reforms will help

³ Economic information from the US Department of State Background Note: Democratic Republic of the Congo (January 2005):

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.htm>

bring more Congolese into the formal economy, since the informal sector has dominated economic activity for most of the recent history of the DRC.

III: Political and Social Challenges

*Controversy over Elections*⁴

Elections are scheduled for June of 2005, but many Congolese feel that the central government is not making sufficient progress towards elections. In January of 2005, protesters demanding elections took to the streets in Kinshasa. At one demonstration, four protesters were killed, and local human rights organizations claimed that police were responsible.

As a result of these deaths, a strike was organized in Kinshasa. The January 14 strike shut down transport in the city, and most businesses were closed. With the head of DRC's electoral commission stating that the vote might need to be postponed, this domestic unrest may spread further.

*Environmental Concerns*⁵

Environmental watchdogs in the DRC claim that military and police officials have facilitated poaching in the eastern areas of the country. The forests of the eastern Congo contain over half the population of African forest elephants, and some environmentalists are concerned that the animals in the Congo will be largely wiped out. From a security perspective, the fact that government agents facilitate the poaching has worrisome implications, since it indicates that the central government may have limited control over police and military units in rural areas.

*HIV/AIDS Epidemic*⁶

Currently, around 1,100,000 Congolese are afflicted with HIV (although estimates vary). While firm information is not available, research indicates that HIV is more prevalent in the eastern region of the country. Furthermore, sexual violence that accompanied the war may have contributed to the spread of the epidemic. President Kabila has spoken out nationally and internationally on this topic, and the United Nations is assisting with response efforts. The military base at Kamina, in the east, is a center for UN-supported HIV prevention and care initiatives.

*Attacks on Aid Workers*⁷

Numerous international NGOs are active within the Congo, providing vital aid services to the population. However, the regions where they are most needed are typically the least stable. Recently, personnel associated with the Doctors without Borders organization were attacked in the eastern Congo. The charity was forced to cease operations and

⁴ Reuters, "Congo capital at standstill" (January 14, 2005)

<http://www.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/africa/01/14/congo.strike.reut/index.html>

⁵ Reuters, "Police, army accused of elephant poaching in African nation" (January 20, 2005)

<http://www.cnn.com/2005/TECH/science/01/20/elephant.poaching.reut/index.html>

⁶ Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS: DR Congo

<http://www.unaids.org/en/geographical+area/by+country/democratic+republic+of+congo.asp>

⁷ Associated Press, "Aid Group Attacked in Eastern Congo" (January 20, 2005).

evacuate much of its staff. According to Amnesty International, the gunmen are associated with elements of the RCD (the Rwandan-backed Congolese Rally for Democracy).

IV: International Issues

*Rebel Activity in the East*⁸

In the Kivu provinces of the DRC, between 8,000 and 12,000 members of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) are taking shelter. The FDLR is a group of Hutu rebels opposed to the current government of Rwanda, and their presence in the region provides an excuse for the Rwandan government to threaten military intervention (see the section below for more information). Also, elements of the RCD (namely, RCD-Goma) have resisted reunification and disarmament. Other rebel groups operate in the region as well, and the central government in Kinshasa is unable to provide effective control over much of the eastern sections of the DRC.

*Tensions with Rwanda*⁹

Rwanda borders the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the east, and the ongoing instability in that region of the Congo has resulted in tensions between the two governments. Rwandan President Paul Kagame claims that rebel groups opposed to his government (namely, the FDLR) are sheltering in the eastern regions of the DRC. Consequently, the Rwandans have sent military forces into the DRC, with the stated purpose of attacking the rebels. President Kabila, in response, announced the deployment of troops to the region to contain the Rwandan activities.

*UN Peacekeeping Activity*¹⁰

The United Nations Mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) was established in 1999, to support the Lusaka peace accords. Through Resolution 1493, the UN Security Council has authorized MONUC to have a military strength of 10,800. The resolution also encourages MONUC to help prepare for elections and assist in the reform of security forces. Furthermore, it authorizes MONUC to assist the government of the DRC with the disarmament and demobilization of combatants, and allows them to take necessary measures to protect UN personnel and installations.

Nations contributing over 1000 troops to the MONUC force include Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, South Africa, and Uruguay.

⁸ International Crisis Group. "Pulling Back from the Brink in the Congo" (July 7, 2004)
<http://www.crisisweb.org/home/index.cfm?id=2854&l=1>

⁹ Information in this section from: Strategic Forecasting, Inc. "DRC: Quelling a Crisis under Watchful Eyes" (Nov. 30, 2004).

¹⁰ Information on MONUC from the official website of the United Nations Mission to the DRC:
<http://www.monuc.org>

V: Military Assets of the Democratic Republic of the Congo¹¹**Army**

<i>Personnel:</i>	28,000
<i>Equipment:</i>	
Tanks:	48 Type 62 light tanks, 16 Type 59 tanks
Armored Cars:	40 AML-90s, 65 AML-30/60s
Armored Personnel Carriers:	12 M-113s, 70 M-3s, 12 YW-531s
Artillery:	24 M116 75mm, 20 Type-56 85mm, 20 M1938 122mm, 14 Type-60 122mm, 8 Type-59 130mm
Mortars:	50 120mm mortars
Multiple Rocket Launchers:	6 BM-21 122mm
Recoilless Rifles:	M18 57mm, M20 75mm, M40A1 106mm
Anti-aircraft:	ZPU-4 14.5mm, 40 M1939 37mm, L60 40mm

Navy (Coast, River and Lake Guard)

<i>Personnel:</i>	2300 (including 600 marines)
<i>Fleet:</i>	2 ex-Chinese Shanghai-II class patrol craft
<i>Coastal Defenses:</i>	HY-2 Silkworm missiles in semi-fixed emplacements
<i>Naval Bases:</i>	Matadi, Kalemie, Kinshasa

Air Force

<i>Personnel:</i>	2,500
<i>Aircraft :</i>	
21 st Wing (combat):	8 SU-25K (ground-attack squadron) 8 MB-326GB (counterinsurgency squadron) 6 MB-326K (counterinsurgency squadron)
22 nd Wing (transport):	3 DHC-5D Buffalo, 5 C-130H Hercules, 6 C-47, 1 BN-2A Islander
Helicopters:	4 SA.330 Puma, 1 SA.332 Super Puma, 7 Alouette IIIs
<i>Major Air Bases:</i>	Kamina, Kinshasa, Kolwezi, Likasi, Lubumbashi, Luluabourg

¹¹ All military information from [Military Technology](#); Jan2003, Vol. 27 Issue 1, p250-1