

Quick Facts: Democratic Republic of Congo

Demography

Population: 66.5 million

Languages: French (official), Lingala, Kingwana, Kikongo, Tshiluba

Religions: Roman Catholic 50%, Protestant 20%, Kimbanguist 10%, Muslim 10%, other 10%

Ethnic groups: Over 200 African ethnic groups of which the majority are Bantu; the 4 largest tribes—Mongo, Luba, Kongo (all Bantu) and the Mangbetu-Azande (Hamitic) make up 45% of the population

Life expectancy: 53.98 years

Median age: 16.3 years

Population Growth Rate: 3.2%

Literacy (age 15+ can read and write): 67.2%

Geography

Capital: Kinshasa

Area: 2,345,410 sq. km; slightly less than one-fourth the size of the US

Natural resources: cobalt, copper, niobium, tantalum, petroleum, industrial and gem diamonds, gold, silver, zinc, manganese, tin, uranium, hydropower, timber

Economy

GDP (purchasing power parity): \$19.03 billion

Currency: Congolese Franc

Population below the Poverty line: NA

Government and Political

Date of Independence: June 30, 1960 (from Belgium)

Type of government: republic

Displacement

Refugees (country of origin):

Angola 132,295

Rwanda 37,313

Burundi 17,777

Uganda 13,904

Sudan 6181

Republic of Congo 5243

IDPs: 1.4 million

According to Worldmapper.org DRC ranked 2nd in the world for War Deaths in 2002:

http://www.worldmapper.org/posters/worldmapper_map288_ver5.pdf



Background:

Following a landmark peace agreement and a tumultuous political transition backed by the world's largest UN peacekeeping operation, the Democratic Republic of the Congo held largely successful elections in 2006. However, elections were not a panacea to Congo's ills; 45,000 people die each month, mostly from the crippling effects of widespread displacement in the country's eastern provinces. Worse still, armed groups routinely commit acts of rape and sexual violence against Congolese women and girls. A recent but increasingly fragile ceasefire is the first step towards a lasting peace, but the threat of renewed conflict remains acute. The U.S., working closely with its allies, must increase its diplomatic engagement to implement the ceasefire and help rid eastern Congo of the militias that wreak havoc on civilian populations.