

2013 Report Card

Security Sector Reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Our 2012 report, **Taking a Stand on Security Sector Reform**, made several recommendations to the Congolese authorities and international community. An assessment of progress towards each of these over the past year offers a clear indication of where renewed efforts could most usefully be focused.



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		GRADE			
RECOMMENDATIONS		ACHIEVED	INCOMPLETE	FAIL	ASSESSMENT
CONGOLESE GOVERNMENT	Renewed political commitment to reform of the security sector		X		The Congolese government has repeatedly stated that the creation of effective and professional security forces, able to protect the population and territory of the country, is its top priority. Yet this has not been followed through with meaningful action.
	Global vision for reform, in concert with civil society and parliament			X	The government has not articulated a coherent road-map for military reform. The law on the organisation of the military remains unimplemented, nearly two years after it was passed, and the Army Reform Plan of 2010 has not been put in place.
	High-level meeting on SSR			X	No dedicated high-level discussion of SSR has taken place.
	Working body on SSR		X		The technical coordination body for military reform is not functional, holds no regular meetings, and has no staff outside Kinshasa. However the working bodies on police and justice reform have continued to function relatively well.
	FARDC conduct - Human rights abuses, corruption and demilitarization			X	Any limited progress has been more than offset by widespread human rights violations, continued theft of salaries, poor command and control, and inadequate support to soldiers in the field. 90% of respondents to an ECI survey in February 2013 rated army performance as 'poor.'
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY	Re-energize engagement on SSR		X		Despite the explicit recognition of SSR in key documents, notably successive UN Security Council resolutions setting out the task of MONUSCO, the donor community has taken little practical action on SSR in the past year. MONUSCO SSR unit has been given increased resources, but has yet to take on a high profile or technical co-ordination role.
	Launch high-level forum on SSR, including appointment of high-level representative		X		No specific high-level forum on SSR has been convened. The appointment of Mary Robinson as UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes partially meets the requirement for a high-level representative, as long as SSR remains a high-priority in her regional engagements.
	Benchmarks agreed with Congolese government			X	No comprehensive, transparent set of benchmarks for SSR have been agreed.
	Contact Group to catalyse the region to take action, notably SADC		X		SADC's increased implication in peace and security in the DRC is a significant development. However, an expanded Contact Group has not formally been constituted.
	MONUSCO – focus on SSR	X			The clarification of MONUSCO's mandate, giving unambiguous priority to SSR is a positive development, and SSR has been a focus of debate at the Security Council and prioritized in successive Secretary General's reports.
	EU to renew EUSEC and EUPOL	X			EUSEC and EUPOL have both had their mandates renewed.
	AU to constitute high level forum			X	The AU played a constructive role in reaching the Addis Ababa agreement, but it has failed to institute a specific SSR-related body.
	World Bank and IMF to include progress on SSR and justice as part of the criteria for program/loan agreement			X	Though the IMF suspended its program in the DRC in late 2012, this was due to concerns over a landmark mines deal, not progress on human rights protection or SSR.

A Report Card on Security Sector Reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo:

Counting the Cost, Learning the Lessons

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Executive Summary: Mixed Results and a Moment of Opportunity

As MONUSCO's newly-mandated Intervention Brigade deploys in eastern Congo and militia fighting continues, the acute need for Security Sector Reform (SSR) in the Democratic Republic of Congo is more apparent than ever.

The importance of SSR has been repeatedly recognized by Congo's leaders, the region, international donors, the United Nations and the Congolese people themselves. A poll conducted by Eastern Congo Initiative (ECI) in February 2013 revealed that a "strong national army" is seen as the most important factor in making respondents most secure (48%) – 28 points more than the next most common response. A year ago, ECI and a coalition of Congolese and international NGOs called DRC donor nations to action in the report, *Taking a Stand on Security Sector Reform*. Despite some encouraging political commitments by all the parties involved, very little practical progress has been made toward advancing SSR. A report card on the recommendations presented in that report reveals mixed results at best. Congolese civilians have paid the price, and are losing what little faith they had in the Government's commitment to end the violence¹.

An Opportunity for Peace

Despite this lack of significant progress, we remain optimistic. The signing of the Peace, Security and Co-operation Framework Agreement for the DRC and the Region² (PSC) by eleven nations and four multilateral organizations, the appointment of President Robinson as U.N. Special Envoy for the Great Lakes³, the appointment of former Senator Russ Feingold as United States Special Envoy for the Great Lakes and the DRC, and the extension and expansion of MONUSCO's mandate in the DRC⁴ constitute a real opportunity to change the game. They also raise the stakes – the credibility of regional leadership, donors and the U.N. is on the line. It is critical that this Framework Agreement does not spawn the same stopgap measures that characterized previous peace initiatives, including the 2006 Nairobi Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, which served as the foundation of the current agreement. The G8 has pledged itself to end sexual violence in conflict⁵, which is impossible in the DRC without effective SSR. Donors need to make good on their promises. The next eighteen months will be vital. Past failures offer lessons that must be learned. There are Six Key Steps that can drive progress:

¹ In the February 2013 survey, 59% of reported that did not believe that the Government was committed to ending the violence, up from 50% in a similar survey in November 2012.

² Signed by 11 regional states in Addis Ababa on February 24 2013

³ Mary Robinson was appointed as the Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region on 18 March 2013

⁴ U.N. Security Council resolution 2098, passed on March 28 2013

⁵ G8 Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, 11 April 2011

1. Build momentum for reform

Recent developments have raised the stakes for the U.N. system, the U.S. and the region, creating strong incentives to ensure that this unique opportunity for peace not go wasted. Without SSR and governance reforms in DRC, this moment *will* pass. The U.N. Special Envoy, the U.S. Special Envoy, and key donor countries must speak with one, persistent voice on the need to prioritize reform. The upcoming Contact Group meeting in Washington, DC this October offers an opportunity for the international community to harmonize its approach, identify roles and responsibilities, and launch a concerted engagement with the Congolese government to define next steps.

2. Support MONUSCO to fulfil its mandate

The Security Council has chosen to put MONUSCO at the heart of SSR efforts, with a remit to support the Congolese Government in investigating human rights abuses, developing an SSR 'implementation roadmap', assisting in military training and – through the offices of the U.N. Special Envoy on the Great Lakes and the SRSG - maintaining regional commitment to peace and ensuring the Congolese Government's ownership of SSR. Achieving these goals will require material support, notably in the provision of technical expertise and political backing. MONUSCO must not be allowed to fail due to patchy or insufficient support.

3. Surge tactical support to the FARDC in the field

FARDC's recent gains against M23, achieved with the support of MONUSCO, have been noted with some pride and relief by civilians in and around Goma. Working through the International Stabilisation and Security Support Strategy (ISSSS), the international community should surge practical support to FARDC headquarters in the field, while the U.N. and U.S. Envoys press for guaranteed payment and basic logistical support to deployed units, including the provision of food and adequate living quarters. At the same time, the U.N., the U.S. and the international community must insist on enforcement of human rights standards and zero tolerance for abuse. Members of the FARDC committed to protecting their fellow citizens must know that the international community is an ally, and that those who abuse their power will be removed from the ranks and sanctioned.

4. Build FARDC rapid reaction capacity

MONUSCO cannot – and should not -- be deployed in perpetuity. Progress towards this goal is possible with sufficient operational and training support from the international community, co-ordinated by MONUSCO. Those states and institutions that have previously engaged in bilateral military training – the US, Belgium, China, South Africa, Angola and France, as well as the U.N. – must now re-engage with comprehensive and coordinated efforts.

5. Get Integration Right.

If the M23 is re-integrated into the FARDC, it would mark the third time they have re-joined the Congolese military, after deserting both previous times. The lessons of past failures must be learned. The FARDC cannot allow war criminals to receive positions in the Congolese military⁶.

⁶ This matches the recent commitment by the G8 to end sexual violence in conflict, '...there should never be any amnesty for sexual violence in peace agreements, and committed ourselves to ensuring explicit

MONUSCO has been tasked by UNSCR 2098 to collect human rights information to meet the requirements of the Human Rights Due Diligence policy; such information should be systematically shared with both the Congolese authorities and civil society. Rebel unit structures and chains of command cannot be imported into FARDC structures.

6. Act today, plan for tomorrow

Diplomatic engagement of the last 6 months offers an opportunity for action that must be seized today. But there is no question that wholesale, structural reform of the Congolese security sector – military, police and justice – will take time, vision, commitment and coordination. Long-term goals and robust frameworks for collaboration must be developed now. Most importantly, the Congolese government will need diplomatic encouragement and technical support to elaborate a holistic vision for the security sector that can meet the needs of Congo's people.

Security Sector Reform in the DRC: Counting the Cost, Learning the Lessons

Introduction: The Price of Doing Nothing

A little more than a year ago, Eastern Congo Initiative (ECI) joined a coalition of Congolese and international NGOs in calling on the Congolese authorities and international community to take a stand on security sector reform (SSR). The UN Secretary General and key Congolese actors, including President Kabila⁷, Defence Minister Luba Ntambo⁸ and newly-appointed head of Land Forces of the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC), Gen. Olenga⁹, acknowledged SSR to be the single most important challenge facing the DRC. SSR is routinely cited as the paramount priority by observers from the donor community, and has been placed at the heart of the work of the UN peacekeeping mission. The world's largest economies recently committed themselves to ending the scourge of sexual violence in conflict¹⁰ - impossible in Congo without a disciplined, effective security sector, prosecution of offenders and enforcement of human rights standards. SSR is the first commitment demanded of the Congolese Government by the Peace, Security and Co-operation Framework Agreement for the DRC and the Region¹¹ (PSC) signed in February by eleven regional leaders and four multilateral organizations.

Yet this rhetoric has not been matched by progress on the ground. The continued imperative for meaningful change - and the price of doing nothing - could not be clearer, tragically underlined by the events of 2012 and the violence that has continued in recent months. The M23 rebellion was born in April 2012 following the desertion of hundreds of soldiers from the FARDC, in part over poor conditions – notably, the lack of pay and food. The new rebellion was led by individuals with long and bloody histories of desertion and abuse who had been allowed to avoid justice and maintain rebel command structures inside the FARDC – most notoriously Bosco Ntaganda. The Congolese defence forces proved unable to defeat M23, despite an enormous advantage in numbers, its effectiveness limited by poor support to troops in the field – some were reported to lack basic resources or food on the front-lines – incoherent leadership and poor morale.

The cost has yet again been borne by Congolese civilians, hundreds of thousands of whom have been displaced by fighting. Many others were raped or killed¹². As the UN Secretary General has recognized '...the recent crisis in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo has again underlined the need to reform the security sector, notably the FARDC.' It is time to revisit this urgent issue.

2012: the Lost Year

Despite the widespread agreement that SSR – particularly military reform – is the foundation for progress across all conflict resolution, state-building and development objectives in the DRC, 2012 saw negligible progress on the ground. The result has been a collapse in Congolese confidence in the international community. On being asked in November 2012 which country they thought could help the DRC, more than 50% of respondents to an ECI survey said that they didn't know, or that there

⁷ <http://www.presidentrdc.cd/spip.php?article78>

⁸ <http://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/rdc-la-r%C3%A9forme-promesse-de-larm%C3%A9e-se-fait-attendre>

⁹ <http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/03/local-communities-forced-to-pay-salaries-of-drc-army-and-rebels/>

¹⁰ G8 Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, 11 April 2011

¹¹ Signed by 11 regional states in Addis Ababa on February 24 2013

¹² <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/02/05/dr-congo-war-crimes-m23-congolese-army>

was no-one who could help, up from just 12% when asked the same question in March 2012. Though much of the responsibility rests with the Congolese authorities, the inaction of the traditional donor community on SSR, particularly on the pivotal issue of military reform, must be noted with alarm.

With the exception of EUSEC, strategic-level practical engagement in military reform or unit-level training has ceased. There has been some positive work on community policing and support to justice, as well as incremental implementation of improved support to the FARDC – for instance the construction of barracks in South Kivu – and the completion of a census of personnel. However, high-level activity and engagement has now declined to almost nothing.

The primary reason for this is clear: with the political legitimacy of the DRC government under fire and its commitment to reform in question, donors have been unwilling to commit financial and political resources to reform, particularly in the context of continued conflict.¹³ **But the logic of waiting until conditions are perfect before reform efforts are renewed simply guarantees continued weakness in the Congolese security services and further cycles of desertion, revolt and violence.** Short-term risk aversion should not be allowed to dominate policy.

Report Card

Our 2012 report, *Taking a Stand on Security Sector Reform*, made several recommendations to the Congolese authorities and international community. An assessment of progress towards each of these over the past year offers a clear indication of where renewed efforts could most usefully be focused.

Congolese Government

Renewed political commitment to reform of the security sector

The Congolese government has repeatedly stated that the creation of effective and professional security forces, able to protect the population and territory of the country, is its top priority¹⁴. The necessary legal framework is now in place. In January 2013, the government allocated an additional \$90 million to the army¹⁵, taking the total allocation to \$247 million. Yet this has not been followed through with meaningful action. **Grade: Incomplete.**

Global vision for reform, in concert with civil society and parliament

The government has not articulated a coherent road-map for military reform. The law on the organisation of the military remains unimplemented, nearly two years after it was passed, and the Army Reform Plan of 2010 has not been put in place. Though there have been some attempts to

¹³ ‘...if indeed these reforms and commitments are made and implemented, we’re prepared to put trainers on the ground, as we did two and a half years ago in Kisangani, to help train soldiers. But we must hold these soldiers to a high standard and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must absolutely ensure that these soldiers perform as professionals, that they are there to protect and defend the country and its borders, and not to prey on its people.’ Jonnie Carson, Speech at Brookings Institution, February 2013

¹⁴ For instance, President Kabila’s ‘State of the Nation’ address, 15 December 2012

¹⁵ <http://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/rdc-la-r%C3%A9forme-promise-de-larm%C3%A9e-se-fait-attendre>

reach out to civil society and parliament – notably a civil society workshop held in October 2012 – these have been piecemeal and inadequate. **Grade: Fail.**

High-level meeting on SSR

No dedicated high-level discussion of SSR has taken place. There have been some internal reflections, notably a seminar on Army reform held in May 2012 in Kinshasa, attended by President Kabila. However, SSR – particularly military reform – has not received sufficient attention. **Grade: Fail.**

Working body on SSR

The technical co-ordination body for military reform is not functional, holds no regular meetings, and has no staff outside Kinshasa. MONUSCO assisted with the establishment of a headquarters level planning cell for the FARDC, and has been mandated to co-ordinate, but this has yet to be operationalized. The working bodies on police and justice reform have continued to function relatively well. **Grade: Incomplete.**

FARDC conduct - Human rights abuses, corruption and demilitarization

There were some encouraging reports of FARDC conduct – notably those units trained by external actors – during the early stages of the M23 conflict. The Congolese government has claimed that some 70% of former CNDP fighters stayed within FARDC structures, and there is anecdotal evidence that salaries for soldiers are now coming through more regularly¹⁶. But this limited progress is more than offset by widespread human rights violations, continued theft of salaries, poor command and control, and inadequate support to soldiers in the field. 90% of respondents to an ECI survey in February 2013 rated army performance as ‘poor’¹⁷. During the recent crisis, ever larger numbers of FARDC were poured into North and South Kivu, increasing pressure on the civilian population.

Grade: Fail.

International Community

Re-energize engagement on SSR

Despite the explicit recognition of SSR in key documents, notably successive UN Security Council resolutions setting out the task of MONUSCO, the donor community has taken little practical action on SSR in the past year. Bilateral military training has trickled away to nothing, though some initiatives on policing and justice continue. The MONUSCO SSR unit has been given increased resources, but has yet to take on a high profile or technical co-ordination role. Documents of the UN Security Council, most importantly resolution 2098 (March 2013) fully recognize the importance of SSR, and place it at centre stage – but this has yet to be operationalized. **Grade: Incomplete.**

Launch high-level forum on SSR, including appointment of high-level representative

¹⁶ There were some encouraging reports of FARDC conduct in the early stages of the M23 conflict¹⁶ ‘More of the D.R.C.’s soldiers and police are being paid regularly and increasingly through mobile banking’ Jonnie Carson speech, February 2013

¹⁷ ECI survey, February 2013

No specific high-level forum on SSR has been convened. SSR has, however, been a feature of the discussions that led to the Addis Ababa agreement of late February 2013, under the auspices of the ICGLR, SADC, the AU and UN. The appointment of Mary Robinson as UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes partially meets the requirement for a high-level representative, as long as SSR remains a high-priority in her regional engagements. **Grade: Incomplete.**

Benchmarks agreed with Congolese government

Though certain international actors have implicitly set conditions on working with the Congolese security sector, and MONUSCO has made co-operation with FARDC units dependent on basic human rights concerns, no comprehensive, transparent set of benchmarks for SSR have been agreed. **Grade: Fail.**

Contact Group to catalyse the region to take action, notably SADC

SADC's increased implication in peace and security in the DRC is a significant development, and the UN Security Council has given significant attention to the issue. However, an expanded Contact Group has not formally been constituted. **Grade: Incomplete.**

MONUSCO – focus on SSR

The clarification of MONUSCO's mandate, giving unambiguous priority to SSR is a positive development, and SSR has been a focus of debate at the Security Council and prioritized in successive Secretary General's reports. Sanctions have been applied to M23 leaders, but no sanctions are in place for those hindering SSR. **Grade: Achieved and must be sustained.**

EU to renew EUSEC and EUPOL

EUSEC and EUPOL have both had their mandates renewed. **Grade: Achieved.**

AU to constitute high level forum

The AU played a constructive role in reaching the Addis Ababa agreement, and is one of the co-guarantors under the '11+4' arrangement, which could act as a forum on SSR. But it has failed to institute a specific SSR-related body. **Grade: Fail.**

World Bank and IMF to include progress on SSR and justice as part of the criteria for program/loan agreement

Though the IMF suspended its program in the DRC in late 2012, this was due to concerns over a landmark mines deal, not progress on human rights protection or SSR. **Grade: Fail.**

Failing Grades, But an Opportunity for Renewed Reform?

Though the report card is disappointing, and there has been no material progress towards sustainable reform over the past year, some important political foundations have nonetheless been laid. The region, notably SADC, has collectively engaged in the DRC at a level not seen since the end

of the transition¹⁸. The UN has unambiguously placed SSR at the heart of its work in the DRC,¹⁹ and Mary Robinson, in her role as UN Special Envoy²⁰ is providing a much-needed focal point for international efforts. A revitalized U.S. engagement in the region, embodied by Secretary of State John Kerry's appointment of former Senator Russ Feingold as U.S. Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region and DRC, brings much-needed leadership to the swarm of international efforts suddenly focused on addressing this problem. The outline of a reform program for the FARDC laid out in successive UN Secretary General's reports, particularly the special report on mandate implementation released in February 2013 and the latest UNSC resolution on the DRC, provides the beginnings of a strategic roadmap to reform. Donors and civil society alike are convinced of the paramount need for military reform. Clearly, the moment is ripe for real progress to be made.

Reintegration and the M23: A Case Study in What Not to Do

The story of the M23 and its predecessors highlights why SSR is so important, and makes past mistakes abundantly clear – mistakes that must not be repeated. The core of the M23 is drawn from a group of fighters who have mutinied from the FARDC at least three times. Forces from the RCD-G rebel group²¹ were nominally integrated into the FARDC through the poorly implemented and incomplete 'brassage' program, intended to create a republican army from the patchwork of rebels and militias that littered the DRC at the end of the Second Congo war in 2003. It was a core of former RCD-G fighters that formed the Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (CNDP) in mid-2006, under the leadership of Laurent Nkunda.

A halt to fighting between the CNDP and FARDC was negotiated in late 2007, resulting in an integration process known as 'mixage' – a lighter touch version of 'brassage' that created nominally-mixed units inside the FARDC command structure. It allowed former rebels to maintain unit coherence and deployment - and fell apart in months. A third attempt at integration took place following a further agreement between the CNDP and Congolese government signed on March 23rd 2009. This collapsed in early 2012, when a significant proportion of these former CNDP fighters again mutinied, coalescing into the M23 movement – named for the March 23rd agreement - that has been at the heart of recent violence.

Each cycle of failed integration and botched restructuring has resulted in enormous suffering to the civilian population of Eastern DRC, poisoned regional relationships, and severely retarded existing efforts at military reform. The chaos of combat – particularly given the repeated collapse of entire FARDC units – makes collecting accurate data on location and numbers of soldiers extremely difficult. Successive waves of reinforcement, drawing on nearly all available combat units at the

¹⁸ The Addis Ababa agreement includes an '11+4' monitoring mechanism, with multilateral organisations (UN, AU, SADC, and ICGLR) acting as guarantors. A tripartite mechanism was agreed between the DRC, South Africa and Angola in March 2013.

¹⁹ The primary mandated task for the UN SRSG under UNSC 2098 (28 March 2013) is given as 'Encourage and accelerate greater national ownership of Security Sector Reform (SSR) by the DRC authorities...and play a leading role in coordinating the support for SSR provided by international and bilateral partners and the UN system'.

²⁰ Former President of Ireland Mary Robinson was appointed as the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region on 18 March 2013, with a remit to support the implementation of the Addis Ababa agreement.

²¹ The RCD-G were one of the three most important actors in the Second Congo War, a Rwandan-backed group that controlled the Eastern third of the DRC until the end of the transition in 2006.

FARDC's disposal, has over-stressed the FARDC's capacity to support them in the field, eroding discipline and morale. And repeated defeats at the hand of well-disciplined and externally supported troops have fractured units, undermined the reputation and confidence of the FARDC, and wasted the scarce political will among the DRC's partners in the donor community to risk resources on military reform.

Learning the Lessons

Unfortunately, even under today's momentous circumstances, progress on reform will be impermanent and fragile unless the lessons of past mistakes are learnt.

The story of the M23 crystalizes three simple lessons. The first lesson is that rushed, ad hoc and partial security sector reform does not work. The successive attempts to integrate former rebels – RCD-G and CNDP – ducked the most difficult and most important issues. Vetting for human rights abuses or criminality was non-existent. Coherent rationalisation of rank for newly-integrated fighters was not undertaken. Former rebels were not given sufficient material support or pay. Perhaps most importantly, former rebels were not inserted into a clear and well-respected command structure, allowing parallel loyalties and chains of command to persist.

The second lesson is that military integration of rebel groups cannot be a substitute for a real peace-process. Past attempts at integration were a product of ad hoc peace deals reflecting the immediate imperative of conflict resolution and behind-the-scenes political compromises. The 'mixage' process for instance reflected the CNDP's refusal to disperse its fighting strength, and the Congolese government's short-term need to end the chaos and humiliation of fighting in the East. Likewise, the integration of the CNDP following the agreement of March 23, 2009 was a product of hidden negotiations between the Rwandan and Congolese governments that allowed the CNDP to retain considerable influence in the east, independent of formal FARDC command structures. In both cases, the fix was only temporary, buying a brief period of uneasy calm before fighting resumed.

Finally, those problems highlighted above – of vetting, the rationalisation of rank, of logistics and command structures – apply to the whole of the FARDC, not just to newly integrated elements. There are continual defections from the FARDC across the whole country, and the ill-discipline and abuses by FARDC personnel are well-documented and pervasive. Frightened communities with no protection are more likely to mobilize, causing further violence and chaos. The third lesson is therefore that the FARDC is unlikely to ever cohere into the professional, effective military that all actors, Congolese and external, want to see, unless these structural problems are addressed.

Turning Analysis into Action – Six Key Steps to Drive Progress

Diplomatic accords and insightful analysis alone will not create measurable progress toward successful SSR. Regional leaders and the international community must act, strategically and soon.

1: Build momentum for reform

Donors must insist on, and assist the DRC government in designing, a comprehensive and inclusive approach to much-needed institutional reforms, including: governance, security and justice. Additional commitments by donors of financial or other support must be predicated on tangible steps by the DRC toward reform, including, at a minimum, the scheduling of long-overdue local and

provincial elections. To encourage progress on security reforms, donors should take practical, coordinated steps toward implementing pre-existing high-level commitments. The October 2013 Contact Group meeting in Washington, DC should serve as a launching point for coordinated, multilateral engagement with the Kabila government to develop a concrete plan for comprehensive SSR. The UN Special Envoy should follow-up by convening an enlarged Contact Group meeting – including key donors, the African Union, the South African Development Community (SADC) and the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) -- to commit all of the stakeholders to next steps in the implementation of the PSC and UN Security Council Resolution 2098, including SSR.

Recommendation for the UN Special Envoy and members of the Contact Group: Use the upcoming meeting of the October 2013 Contact Group in Washington, DC to set a plan – including roles, responsibilities and next steps – for supporting implementation of SSR in the context of the PSC and UNSCR 2098.

2: Surge support to the FARDC in the field

The Congolese Government has repeatedly tried to improve support to the FARDC, most importantly in ensuring that pay reaches individual soldiers²². A ‘zero-tolerance’ policy for human rights abuses was announced in 2009, and President Kabila has reportedly made a personal commitment to prosecuting crimes of sexual violence²³. These commitments must be implemented, most importantly through clarification of high-level command structures and top-down enforcement of discipline – those responsible for the theft of salaries must be prosecuted, and the Inspector General’s office reinforced. EUSEC²⁴ has demonstrated that effective support to the payment of salaries is possible. The ISSSS²⁵ is charged with improving security and stability across the East. MONUSCO has a mandate to protect civilians and collect information on human rights abuses. A coordinated surge of practical measures to improve the conduct and morale of the FARDC is a vital factor in creating the conditions for effective reform.

Recommendation for the EUSEC, MONUSCO, ISSSS, donors and the Government of DRC:

Implement a surge in support to FARDC troops in the field to ensure pay is received, human rights standards and discipline enforced and living conditions are adequate.

3: Support the UN to fulfil its mandate

In addition to authorizing a new intervention force to take on rebel groups, UNSCR 2098 gives significant responsibilities to the UN system to assist and encourage SSR. The UN Special Envoy and Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) are mandated to support the PSC, notably ‘...to continue and deepen security sector reform.’ Much of the responsibility will fall on the civilian component of MONUSCO. Most immediately, this will require the development of an ‘implementation roadmap’ for SSR, as well as assistance in the creation of a rapid reaction force. The

²² ‘I will personally make sure that every soldier receives his pay’, FARDC Chief of Land Forces Olenga

²³ ‘The firm commitment that was made so personally to me by President Kabila to more effectively prosecute crimes of sexual violence is absolutely crucial, and together we must hold the President to his word.’ UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, 11 April 2011

²⁴ EUSEC is the European Union mission supporting military reform in the DRC, which has worked on guaranteeing the ‘chain of payments’ for Congolese soldiers

²⁵ The International Stabilisation and Security Support Strategy is the main international vehicle for support to the Congolese Government’s stabilisation efforts

Security Council has taken the decision to place MONUSCO at the heart of SSR, but its members – the Permanent Five in particular – must ensure that MONUSCO does not encounter staffing problems or access to expertise that hinder this work.

Recommendation for the UN Permanent Five: Ensure that MONUSCO, the SRSG and UN Special Envoy have sufficient political and logistical support and resources to fulfil their mandate

4: Build FARDC rapid reaction capacity

Though overall FARDC performance has continued to be abysmal, the limited success achieved in recent years in unit-level training initiatives should not be dismissed completely. Forces trained by Belgium, South Africa and the United States are reported to have performed relatively well for a time, but returning them to the larger dysfunctional FARDC without widespread reform means important gains are reversible. Nevertheless, progress is possible. MONUSCO must swiftly undertake a mapping exercise to determine the necessary training and support to constitute a rapid reaction force able to take over from the UN intervention force, in collaboration with the Congolese Government. U.S. Africa Command should coordinate with MONUSCO's effort, identifying the resources – funding, trainers, equipment and time – needed to mount a successful, comprehensive training program for FARDC. Donors must stand ready to convert past bilateral training initiatives into a coordinated, harmonized training effort.

Recommendation for MONUSCO and the donor community: Identify requirements for a comprehensive training program and coordinate training, equipment, specialist advice and technical support to generate a robust, professional rapid reaction capacity in the FARDC.

5: Get integration right

The cycle of *ad hoc* integration, failed reform and repeated defection must be broken. If the regional focus can be maintained, then a peace-deal between the Congolese government and the M23 may be imminent. It is vital that this deal does not turn a blind eye to human rights abusers or exacerbate the structural weaknesses of the FARDC by allowing rebels to retain parallel unit structures or commands. The terms of any peace deal must reflect these imperatives.

To the Congolese government, regional states and moderators of the Kampala talks: Ensure that the terms of any peace deal with the M23 respect human rights considerations and break parallel chains of command.

6: Elaborate a long-term vision and coordination mechanism

Long-term SSR will take years to implement, but work must begin now. A holistic vision for the Congolese security sector and effective on-the-ground coordination will both be necessary. The 'implementation roadmap' embodied in the PSC will provide a starting point, but must be linked to a long-term blueprint for the security sector, turning recent Congolese legislation on reorganization of the armed forces and national police into reality. Likewise, immediate cooperation on generating rapid reaction capacity will need to be embodied in a long-term coordination mechanism. The MONUSCO SSR unit has been given the mandate to provide support to technical coordination, and can act as a secretariat for a re-launched military reform committee, under the leadership of the relevant Congolese Ministries.

Recommendation for the Congolese Government, MONUSCO and donors: Collaborate on drawing up a practical, inclusive and comprehensive vision for the Congolese security sector, and establish a robust working-level coordination and follow-up mechanism for military reform.

Conclusion

2012 was a difficult year for the DRC, and despite significant diplomatic progress, 2013 has not proved any better.

Changes in the international and regional political landscape may have laid a foundation for progress. The need for effective SSR, particularly military reform, has never been clearer, or more widely recognized. Donors must take advantage of these developments, make good on the commitments they have already made, and co-ordinate a sequenced, strategic engagement in the Congolese security sector.

There is no doubt that eastern Congo will remain afflicted by low-level armed conflict for the near future. Humanitarian needs will remain acute and Congolese governance weak. But without effective SSR any progress that results from renewed international engagement will remain uncertain, and – in the long-term – will be reversed by renewed violence. *The international community must set expectations among its constituents that the reform process will take decades, and the commitment to see it through is the only thing standing between the people in eastern Congo and continued violence and loss.*