IMUN 2025 Research Report

Security Council Issue #2: The question of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Introduction:

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is an urgent matter of concern for the United Nations Security Council because of the regional instability, ethnic tensions and political difficulties. Areas such as the "mineral-rich" east of the DRC has been undergoing tensions for the past 30 years (Zane). Various armed groups compete with national authorities for power and control of the nation due to its possibilities for fortune. This instability has led to violence, war crimes, and a humanitarian crisis.

Background Information:

There have been various aggressions in this region dating back to the Rwandan genocide in 1994. When the Rwandan government was defeated by the Rwandan Patriotic Front, and a new Tutsi-led government was established. Rwanda consists of two ethnic groups, the Hutus, and the Tutsis. Following the genocide, nearly two million Hutus crossed the Congolese boarder and settled in refugee camps in the DRC's provinces of North Kivu and South Kivu (Center for Preventive Action). The new Rwandan government believed the vast Hutu population in the DRC (known as The Republic of Zaire at the time) to be a threat to the Tutsis in Rwanda and invaded the nation. This war led to thousands of deaths, alongside non-combatant Congolese in the North and South Kivu provinces suffering casualties.

Another conflict arose between the DRC and Rwanda in 1998. The DRC's president, Laurent Kabila attempted to weaken Rwanda's military presence in the DRC. In order to do this, he

removed Tutsis from government, ordered all foreign troops out of the country, and allowed "Hutu armed groups to organize at the boarder" (Center for Preventive Action). Rwanda sought for the boarders to be controlled by their troops to further the distance between the Hutu groups in the east of the DRC. This led to their invasion in 1998. Fighting occurred until 2002, with three million people dying by 2004 because of not only the war, but a humanitarian crisis associated with it.

In 2008, the M23 was established in the DRC. M23, or the March 23 Movement, is an armed group that consist of primarily ethnic Tutsis. They were created in 2012 after the Congolese government failed to integrate Tutsi fighters into the army, as promised in a 2009 agreement (Mureithi and Egbejule). In 2012 the M23 made various territorial gains in the east and seized Goma, the capital of the North Kivu province that is home to one million people (Zane). This seizure was met with accusations of war crimes and human rights violations, leading to the M23 withdrawing from Goma, and being expelled from the country. In 2021, the M23 fighters took up arms again under the pretext that Tutsis were not being protected.

In January 2025, Goma was once again captured by the M23 group, in February they captured Bakavu, the capital of South Kivu. According to the UN Refugee Agency, since January 1, 2025, more than 100,000 refugees fled to neighboring countries (Ali). Not only that, but 6.9 million internally displaced people reside in the DRC, with 5 million in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri, the regions with vast conflict ("Democratic Republic").

As of June 27th, 2025, a peace treaty between the DRC and Rwanda was signed. The treaty aims to end decades of conflict, as it calls for "disengagement, disarmament and conditional integration of armed groups fighting in eastern DRC" (Booty et al.). Despite overwhelming

evidence, Rwanda denies supporting the M23, and the treaty leaves the situation with the rebel group unaddressed.

Focus of Debate:

The debate on the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo should focus on the developing hostility in the nation. Delegates should include the broader geopolitical consequences, not only the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but nations such as Rwanda, and those who attempt to control their minerals.

During debate, delegates should attempt to address the humanitarian crisis caused by the violence in the area alongside how to confront the M23 group, that was not taken into account with the current treaty. Immediate action for these issues is necessary in solving the conflict, as there is limited support and inadequate amounts of medicine, food and protection for the civilians.

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