**SOLIDARITE ET ASSISTANCE INTEGRALE AUX PERSONNES DEMUNIES**

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**THIRD ANALYSIS ON LRA ACTIVITIES IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

This is my third analysis[[1]](#footnote-1) on the LRA activities in Democratic Republic of Congo and it is a follow up analysis on the first and second which was produced in July and August 2011 respectively. This analysis will focus on three month period that is September, October and November. In these months there are number of issues which will be looked at: firstly statistics of LRA activities for the three months, secondly condemnation of 68 FARDC who have committed various crimes, thirdly effect of Congolese election on LRA activities and lastly analysis of the current situation and some recommendations. It is worth notifying that Mbororo will not be discussed as a separate point as it was in my second analysis but will be considered in the analysis as well as tension between FARDC and UPDF.

1. **STATISTICS OF LRA ACTIVITIES**

These statistics help us to have a glance on LRA activities for the last five months although our analysis will focalize on the last three months of September, October and November painted in yellow. A better understanding of this table will come in the analysis on point 4.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Months** | **June** | **July** | **August** | **Sept** | **Oct** | **Nov** | **TOTAL** |
| Number of attacks | 17 | 26 | 11 | **4** | **11** | **16** | 85 |
| Number of children kidnapped | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 9 |
| Number of adult kidnapped | 1 | 2 | 10 | 0 | 3 | **10** | 26 |
| Number of Congolese escaped children | 2 | 5 | 2 | **11** | **14** | **8** | 42 |
| Number of Ugandan escaped children | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Number of Soudanese escaped children | 0 | 4 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 9 |
| Number of CAR escaped children | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Number of adult escaped | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 3 | **11** | 19 |
| Number of LRA escaped | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Number of women raped by FARDC | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Number of civilian killed | 12 | 3 | 11 | **2** | **1** | **3** | 32 |
| Number of FARDC killed | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Number of UPDF killed | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Number of LRA killed | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | **10** | 17 |
| Number of Civilian wounded | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | **8** | 16 |
| Number of FARDC wounded | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Number of UPDF wounded | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Number of LRA wounded | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Number of LRA captured | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| Congolese soldier killing civilian | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | **1** | 0 | 7 |
| Congolese soldier looting | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Congolese soldier attacking civilian | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 | **4** | 0 | 9 |
| Mbororo killing congolese soldier | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | **3** | 6 |
| Congolese soldier killing mbororo | 0 | 0 | 1 | **15** | 0 | 0 | 16 |

1. **Condemnation of 68 FARDC for various crimes**

The first public trial of FARDC committing various crimes in October 2011 in Dungu came as a first step towards justice to various victims of FARDC crimes. This was already alluded to in my second analysis. On the final verdict 16 FARDC have been condemned to death especially for various civilian serial killings and 52 condemned for various crimes going from bullet missing in their guns to raping of women and children. It is not the final verdict that interest us here in this analysis instead the effect of this verdict on the behavior of other FARDC, why the higher ranging officer of FARDC were not condemned[[2]](#footnote-2)? Is there any change of strategy of FARDC committing the same crime against civilian? All these points will be developed in the analysis in point 4.

1. **EFFECT OF CONGOLESE ELECTION ON LRA ACTIVITIES**

28th November 2011 was the date of Congolese election, the attention and effort of the government was towards securing a win in this election therefore LRA was not priority during these three months period. This was coupled with the fact that FARDC and UPDF had not been in good term during this period leading to FARDC asking UPDF to leave Congolese soil therefore leaving a vacuum of security in the area. This has helped LRA regain control of areas they have lost to UPDF or FARDC. This point will be well developed in the analysis in point 4.

1. **THE ANALYSIS**

In my first and second analysis I made allusion to the movement of LRA in July to Central African Republic (CAR) which justified the high number of attacks in July and lower number of attacks as well in August. September recorded the lowest number of attacks based on the fact that a good number of LRA was still in CAR but in October and November the number of attacks has gone up again. There are some good reasons that may justify this. First the movement of LRA is now back from CAR to Democratic Republic of Congo. This is helped in somehow by the fact that a good number of UPDF has withdrawn from DRC following the request from FARDC that UPDF should withdraw. The second probable reason is that of Congolese election, whereby the LRA issue was not a priority to the government therefore leaving a leeway for LRA movement. The other probable reason is that of Christmas and New year. LRA are known for attacking and moving away from the area of attack as fast as possible. Since their activities were basically in CAR for the last three months, this made people in DRC forget about LRA for few months. Therefore it would be strategically better for them to come back to DRC near Christmas and New year feasts and attack people during this feast period. The last possible reason is that of the beginning of dry season in DRC, CAR and South Sudan. During this period people burn bush making it difficult for LRA to move without being seen or detected. Therefore it would be better for them to move already to the thick forest and lay low during this dry season.

The second issue we should look at is the kidnapping or abductions. During this three month period there have been less children abduction just 2 in November but however 13 adult abductions with ten taking place in November. What can be a possible reason for this? This was a period of movement back from CAR to DRC therefore they did not need more children during the movement however they needed some adult to help basically as carriers. All the 10 adult abducted in November have been all women leading to the other reason that these women have been abducted as sex slaves rather than just carriers.

The third issue is that of escapees. It is basically known that most of children escape during peaceful period when there is no big military campaign against LRA. Therefore more LRA are not very strict on children, they send them to look for firewood, fetch water, and so on. This is what may justify this high number of 18 children and 3 adults escaping in October and 16 children escaping in September. In November, it is interesting to compare the number of adult escapees and abductees. 11 adult escaped while 10 were abducted meaning that LRA has abducted minus one in November. 8 children escaped against 2 abducted this is a good news. The most important issue I want to underline here will come in the recommendation that is of the radio program during this period of peace.

The fourth issue is that of killings. During the three month period 6 civilians, 7 FARDC, 10 LRA and 15 Mbororo have been killed. 1 civilian was killed by FARDC and the remaining 5 by LRA. The rate of civilian killings has gone down basically due to the effect of the condemnation of 68 FARDC who used to imitate LRA behavior in killing people. Probably those FARDC responsible for most killings have been arrested therefore sending warning signal to other FARDC who might have the same idea of copy cutting LRA behavior. 7 FARDC have been killed during this three month period. Probably all the 7 FARDC have been killed by Mbororo as retaliation FARDC have killed 15 Mbororo. There is undeclared war between FARDC and Mbororo. The plausible reason for this undeclared war can be read in various reports on Mbororo especially the report done by Pax Kristi. The few reasons I am going to give may not be the most important ones but may contribute for a better understanding. The first reason is that of the green light given by the Congolese government to FARDC to forcefully chasse Mbororo from Congolese territory. Therefore since Mbororo have a lot of money in the bush and cows, it has been a very lucrative market for the FARDC, that almost most FARDC want to be posted where they are Mbororo because in few months time they become extremely rich. This is couple with the fact that Congolese government is not even condemning or punishing any FARDC who has committed various crimes against Mbororo. The message that is being sent by the attitude of the Congolese government is that you can attack Mbororo and loot them there is no problem but if you attack or kill Congolese civilian you will be arrested. This is the change in strategy I allude in to it in point 2. Therefore, there will be recommendation on this point. The last possible reason is that Mbororo have been seen by the Congolese government as a group which has been called by former vice president Jean-Pierre Bemba. Working on the principle of “the friend of my enemy is my enemy”, the Congolese government has classified silently the Mbororo as the enemy of the government or Jean Pierre Bemba’s spies. 10 LRA have been killed between 26 and 30th of November in the battle in regaining control of Garamba National Park region with commandos formed by US. Will there be retaliation on civilian during Christmas period? Therefore there is a need for another recommendation here.

Recommendations:

* Recommendation to the regional taskforce: LRA are moving now back to DRC, meaning there will be possible attacks during Christmas and New Year. It is recommended to all civil society taskforce to be more carefully during this period and inform civilians to be more watchful and vigilant. Avoid being alone in very remote areas looking for fish, meat, and so on for the feast because it is the culture of most Azande.
* A lobbying should do be done by Conciliation Resources, Pax Kristi, Resolve or other international NGOs in New York so that Monusco and FARDC work together to protect people surrounding the Garamba National Park from LRA attacks during Christmas period.
* Conciliation Resources, Pax Kristi, or Human Wright Watch should investigate the more recent crimes against Mbororo and do some lobbying to pressure Congolese government to punish any FARDC responsible for killings and abuses against Mbororo.
* Based on the statistics we have more escapees during peaceful period than during military campaign period because of the fear of being killed when escaping either by the community or soldiers is not there during this period. Therefore intensifying community radio program calling abductees to come out in local languages, and also talking to the community to welcome home the returnees is very important. This radio program cannot work better during military campaign. Therefore we recommend community radio program in local languages in DRC.

**Dungu, 4th December 2011.**

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1. It will be more helpful for any reader to read my first and second analysis on LRA situation in Democratic Republic of Congo for him or her to understand better this third analysis because many references are made to those analyses. These analyses are posted on our website, contact me for further information. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This point will not be discussed in this analysis but I can still give my point of view on it because we have some plausible evidence on it. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)