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in the Democratic Republic
of the Congo

ECHOS *de la* MONUSCO



F. Tshisekedi, D. Gressly and the Force Commander at Goma



MONUSCO FORCE
...for the protection of civilians

PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS, PILLAR N° 1 OF THE FORCE'S MANDATE



✍ By Charles Antoine Bambara*

Protection of civilians (PoC) is an important pillar of MONUSCO's mandate. In this framework, MONUSCO provides support to the National Security Forces, as it is the Congolese government's primary responsibility to protect the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

With the recent downsizing of civilian and military personnel, the Mission has set itself the goal of concentrating in the east of the country where security issues are a real challenge. MONUSCO is therefore concentrating its efforts in the areas most affected by violence, namely Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu, Tanganyika and Kasai.

The recent Security Council Resolution 2463 on the DRC calls on MONUSCO Force "to provide effective, dynamic and integrated protection for civilians at risk of physical violence as part of a comprehensive approach, including deterring and preventing all armed groups and local militias from committing violence against the population or by intervening to stop it, in consultation with local communities".

Like other Peacekeeping Missions, MONUSCO deals with the protection of civilians through three different lines of action:

1. Dialogue and commitment
2. Physical protection
3. Protective environment

Protection by projection

In 2018, MONUSCO opted for the repositioning of its assets from a mainly static posture to a more dynamic one. This process builds on the Force transformation initiated with the deployment of two Rapidly Deployable Battalions (RDBs) in North and South Kivu, and shortly

thereafter in the Ituri Province. The projection meets the need for agility, dynamism and coverage of the entire country through specific protection actions. Protection by projection is not intended to replace "protection by presence", but to strengthen it: in places where the mission is currently static, it will reduce its bases and centralize its assets and workforce in fewer but larger bases, hence a larger proportion of the Force could be deployed.

Neutralization of armed groups

MONUSCO Force's mission also consists in neutralizing armed groups. All the Mission's components contribute to this objective, though this is basically the responsibility of the Intervention Brigade, commonly known as FIB, which has an offensive mandate.

However, the protection of civilians should not be seen only under the military prism, it necessarily requires a political and social strategy to reduce violence and insecurity.

Child protection

With MONUSCO's support, FARDC was declared a "Child-free Force" in 2017, meaning they no longer recruit or employ any children under 18 years of age. MONUSCO has been working to extract children from several armed groups with a view to securing the same commitments and demobilizing all the children in their ranks so they can go to school instead of fighting.

*Director of MONUSCO Strategic Communication and Public Information Division

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Comments and views expressed in this magazine by people outside MONUSCO are the sole responsibility of their authors.

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FORCE LEADERSHIP

Lieutenant General Elias Rodrigues Martins Filho has had a distinguished military career within the Brazilian Army spanning more than 37 years. He served as the Chief of Office of the International Organizations Office at the Ministry of Defence in Brazil. Previously, he served as Chief of Defence Intelligence in the Intelligence Office of the Ministry of Defence, and as Director of the Brazilian Army Command, War and Staff College. In 2013 and 2014, he was Chief of Operations at the Brazilian Military Western Command, having been also the Commanding Officer of the Brazilian Presidential Guard Battalion between 2009 and 2011.



Lieutenant General Elias Rodrigues Martins Filho,
MONUSCO Force Commander

He has extensive peacekeeping experience, having served as Planning Officer in the Force Generation Service in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations from 2005 to 2008. He also served as Deputy Military Adviser to the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations, between 2001 and 2003, and as Staff Officer at the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) from 1995 to 1996.

Lieutenant General Elias Rodrigues Martins Filho holds a post-graduate degree in International Relations from the University of Brasilia. He is graduated from the National Defense War College of the Escola Superior de Guerra, Brazil, in 2011.

Born in Fortaleza in 1960, he is married and has three children.



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Lieutenant General Elias Rodrigues Martins Filho, MONUSCO Force Commander

Message of the Force Commander

MONUSCO is one of the most active and challenging United Nations missions in the world having to fulfill an innovative Mandate within a very challenging and dynamic environment in accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2409 (2018) and 2463 (2019). MONUSCO's Force is a complex military structure under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations designed to carry out tasks concerning the Protection of Civilians (PoC) and Neutralization of Armed Groups (NoAG). It currently operates with an authorized troop ceiling of 16,215 military personnel, 660 military observers and staff officers, 391 police personnel and 1,050 personnel of formed police units.

For a mission that has been active for almost two decades, many achievements can be listed. Today's challenges are still related to instability and to the threats that some Armed Groups still pose to the civilian population of the Country. Currently, most of these threats and tensions are concentrated in the eastern part of the DRC.

Throughout these years, many lessons were learned, some of which have been extensively discussed in the Santos Cruz Report and Action for Peacekeeping. Proper mindset, focus on force protection, proactivity, and intelligence are some of the important aspects of such analysis, the implementation of which demands a lot of work and innovative solutions.

Prevention is key... Prevention is the only effective way to really protect the affected populations. And how the Force can prevent? Just two options: deploying preventively or neutralizing the armed groups that threaten civilians. And that requires actions beyond the Force: political strategy and actions, civilian affairs and humanitarian support and support from the population, for example.

As it is well known, there is no purely military solution. The Force is deployed to contribute, with the Government and its National Security Forces, in particular the DRC Armed Forces (FARDC), to the protection of civilians and the stabilization of the Country, creating a platform for development and better life for all.

Based on these views, I have issued directives to the Force on how to act in order to better contribute to the fulfillment of the Mandate.

Comprehensive approach

All actions, from planning to offensive operations, must bring on board all components of the Mission, civilian, military, police, humanitarian, etc., and all concerned sections in order to get a comprehensive view and approach. And in doing so, build a more solid and effective planning and action. The knowledge and expertise of specialized sections are extremely relevant for what needs to be achieved, and must be part of the entire process.

Preventive Deployment

Future threats and attacks can be prevented. With a proper intelligence gathering, analysis and information system, the Mission will know in advance where the next attack, massacre and killing will, or may, happen. The Early Warning System developed in the Mission a few years ago is an important tool for this purpose. Therefore, with such information in hand, the Force can deploy preventively in areas where civilians are or will be at risk, prevent the attacks and ultimately save lives.

Building Confidence

The situation in the RDC is complex and asymmetric. It is hard to distinguish who belongs to an armed group and who is a normal citizen forced from time to time to support the armed group. To protect the population and/or neutralize the armed groups, MONUSCO requires the trust and cooperation of the population. Therefore, the Mission must have very good communications tools and channels with the authorities and the locals, who should have a good understanding of the UN Mandate and of how the Mission can support them. Interacting with the locals, leaders and ordinary citizens, through the Force's presence or projection is essential.

Interacting with DRC's National Security forces

Interaction with national and local authorities and agents is key to the success of the Mission. The Forces Armées

de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) and the Police Nationale du Congo (PNC) are the main partners that MONUSCO Force has in the DRC. The Force provides additional troops and assets to protect civilians and neutralize the armed groups and contributes to the stabilization of the country. However, it must be clear that the protection of civilians and the neutralization of armed groups are the primary responsibility of the Government of the RDC and its national institutions. Good cooperation between the Force and the FARDC, in particular, can make a difference and leave a legacy of peace, stability and stronger institutions.

Operations

The posture and attitude of the Force and its members are the basis for what is to be achieved. Leadership at all levels, proactive posture, well-trained and well-equipped troops, prompt response and commitment are some of the most important requisites for the desired performance of MONUSCO's military component.

The implementation of both concepts "protection through presence" and "protection through projection" is essential to lower the tensions between communities and provide the best possible outcome within the Force's capabilities. Therefore, establishing Company Operating Bases (COB), deploying Standard Combat Modules (SCD), combat and Recce patrolling, Quick Reaction Forces (QRF), all have shown to be effective.

The Force must deploy offensive operations to neutralize the armed groups that pose threats on the population. In that regard, the Force counts on the Intervention Brigade (FIB), which is deployed in the Beni territory. However, it is worthy to mention that the entire Force, in particular the Special Forces units, Aviation units, Infantry Battalions and Engineer Companies, all are contributing to such operations.

In order to neutralize the armed groups, it is necessary to have a political strategy, civilian engagement, the support of the population and the National Security Forces on board. Continuous pressure over these armed groups is the recipe for success. ■



President of DRC Felix Tshisekedi meets the Force Commander and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General David Gressly



Force Commander meets FARDC Leadership in Kinshasa



SRSG Leila Zerrougui inspecting Guard of Honour during medal parade ceremony at GHANBATT base in Kinshasa

Presentation of MONUSCO Force

The mission of the Force, as set out by the United Nations Security Council in its Resolution 2463, is to ensure the protection of civilians, to support the stabilization and strengthening of State institutions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and key governance and security reforms. With its mandate thus defined, the Force has, on a daily basis, since the creation of MONUC/MONUSCO, been engaged in the quest for peace through actions in support of the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC), institutional and training support, as well as engineering works across the territory.

The first United Nations (UN) troops deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) arrived in 1960 to help to restore order and calm following a series of internal clashes in the country. Thirty-nine years later, the consequences of the Rwanda Genocide have led the UN to deploy a new mission in the DRC, which in 2010 was transformed into MONUSCO.

The MONUSCO was configured in order to allow the use of all necessary means, including offensive operations, to carry out Protection of Civilians (PoC), Neutralization of Armed Groups (NoAG), and to support the Government of the DRC in its stabilization and peace consolidation efforts. To do so, the Force is deployed in five regions within the country. These regions are the Western Sector, Northern Sector, Central Sector and Southern Sector, and the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB).

The MONUSCO Force filling up these areas consists of 11 Infantry Battalions; 5 Rapid Deployable Battalions (RDB), a new concept of infantry organization characterized by increased mobility and combat power compared to classical infantry battalions; 5 Aviation Units (comprising a total of 20 Utility Helicopters and 7 Attack Helicopters); 4 Engineering Companies; 3 Special Forces Companies; 2 Military Police Units; one Level III Hospital; and other Military Medical facilities. All those units are led by one Force Headquarters (FHQ), four Sectors HQ and one FIB HQ.

Currently, fifty countries contribute with military personnel to MONUSCO. They are:

Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Mongolia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Republic of South Africa, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay and Zambia. These military are deployed in the mission area as staff officers, contingent members (troops) or military observers.

In the following pages, more details regarding the MONUSCO Force. ■



Force Commander visits Operational Bases and makes recommendations on Force Protection



M23 crisis in Goma : MONUSCO Urubatt armored vehicles patrolling streets of Goma for civil protection on 13th of July 2012

PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS: THE FORCE PRIORITY

There is need of a comprehensive approach to deal with Protection of Civilians (PoC) challenges in the DRC. There is also an acknowledgement that all the diverse Mission components must work closely and coordinate their activities better. Therefore, a framework for a Comprehensive Approach to arriving at tailored Stabilization/Protection of Civilians/Neutralization of Armed Groups strategies for each area of the DRC has been developed jointly by the Force, the Stabilization Support Unit (SSU) and the Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Operations and the Rule of Law. PoC is the Force's priority, conceived and planned for the best achievement by developing strategies of Protection through Projection & Protection through Presence.

CHILD PROTECTION : AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE FORCE'S ENGAGEMENT

Conflicts disproportionately affect children. Many are subject to abductions, military recruitment, killing, maiming and numerous forms of exploitation. The Security Council has addressed this issue since 1999 and the protection of children in conflict has been included in the mandates of peace

operations since 2001. In these past ten years, peace operations have helped release thousands of child soldiers and advocated for legislative reform. Here in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, children have continued to bear the brunt of conflict and have been victims of over 11,500 grave violations committed by more than 40 parties to the conflict as verified by the United

Nations. Their vulnerability to all grave violations has been accentuated by the multiplicity and fragmentation of armed groups, persistent armed conflict in the East and new waves of violence including of a growing inter-ethnic character. MONUSCO has the largest Child Protection Section in any peacekeeping mission, headed by Mrs. Dee Brillenburg Wurth. She leads a team of about 30 child protection officers who monitor and report on child rights violations on a daily basis. The information they gather is analyzed and integrated into the statistics of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism to understand how the different armed groups are operating in order to undertake targeted prevention activities and engage with their leaders. Her team have been responsible for the release of more than 6000 children over the last three years and facilitating their onward passage to UNICEF to enable their rehabilitation back into Congolese society. As the largest component of the mission, and with a wide geographical spread, the Force has made a vital contribution to the protection of children. To address child protection concerns, the Force employs a Gender and Child Protection Officer whose function is to ensure that child protection is mainstreamed throughout the organization and an integral part of the Force's engagement. ■



Expression of sympathy between Congolese child and female peacekeeper from Indonesian Rapid Deployment Battalion



Bangladeshi Rapidly Deployable Battalion (BANRDB) troops being briefed by patrol leader prior to a Long Range Patrolling mission

NORTHERN SECTOR

The Northern Sector's area of responsibility is located in Ituri, one of the 26 provinces of the DRC, covering a total area of 65,658 km² (25,351 square miles). French is the province's official language while Swahili is the local language. The Ituri Rainforest is located in this province, which lies northeast of the Ituri River and on the western side of Lake Albert. Ituri shares borders with Uganda and South Sudan. It encompasses five administrative territories, namely: Aru (6,740 km²), Djugu (8,184 km²), Irumu (8,730 km²), Mahagi (5,221 km²) and Mambasa (36,783 km²).

The Northern Sector Headquarters is deployed in the province's capital, Bunia, and the Brigade consists of two battalions from Bangladesh (BANRDB) and Morocco (MORBAT). Also deployed in Bunia, is the Bangladesh Air Force Contingent (BANAIR).

The region of Ituri is a sensitive area where there are active Armed Groups (AG) such as the Force de Résistance Patriotique de l'Ituri (FRPI), an armed militia based in the village of Tcheyi, southwest of Bunia.

Operations

The Northern Sector has to its credit many concrete

actions, including operations, patrols and other important tasks successfully carried out in its area of responsibility. The operations completed so far include, among others, Operation STABILITY FOR DJUGU, Operation PIGEON BLANC, Operation OUTREACH, Joint Operation ANGES DE PAIX, Operation BLUE MOON, and Operation QUEST FOR



Prize distribution ceremony of a friendly volleyball match arranged in Ituri



Force Commander and Northern Sector Commander discussing Zone of Operations in Blukwa SCD

HARMONY. Through its high-quality work, the Northern Sector has been able to promote the Protection of Civilians (PoC), increasing its liaison with FARDC and local authorities in the area.

Joint Operation ANGES DE PAIX was conducted with the BANRDB, the URUBAT Company and the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) in three phases, lasting from 17 March 2018 to 10 April 2018. The aim was to establish a foothold in DJUGU territory in order to maintain domination over vulnerable spots and to identify negative forces along the villages in the littoral areas of Lake Albert.

USING PROTECTION THROUGH PROJECTION IN RESPONSE TO DJUGU CRISIS

On 09 February 2019, when intercommunal violence broke out in Djugu, the Northern Sector responded by launching a long-range patrol to the area. More than 30 people including women and children were killed and around 500 houses burned in this latest episode of violence between Hema and Lendu communities. Moreover, approximately 5000 people from Djugu fled to Bunia City as internally displaced people (IDPs). Given the volatility of the situation and the inability to

dominate the area from Bunia due to the large distance, the Northern Sector Commander decided to execute Protection Through Projection (PTP) by launching a Standing Combat Deployment (SCD) at Djugu Center, involving BANRDB troops. The troops conducted hundreds of day and night patrols, which allowed for them to contact community leaders and locals, escort MONUSCO civilian partners, deter the assailants, oversee the return of hundreds of IDPs, and create a security blanket to protect the vulnerable population. ■



The chief of FRPI militia Mbandhu Adirodu, hands over an AK-47 weapon to the second commander of the 32nd FARDC military region, Brigadier General Sadiki Maboko



Military Observer from Morocco building confidence in Northern Sector's area

Force Intervention Brigade



Tanzanian soldiers patrolling in the difficult areas of Beni

The Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) is a tri-nation military component of the United Nations Mission for the Stabilization of Congo (MONUSCO) mandated to conduct offensive operations aimed at neutralizing illegal Armed Groups (AG) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), either unilaterally or jointly with the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC). The Brigade comprises contingents from Malawi, Tanzania and South Africa, and is a result of arrangements between Southern African Development Community (SADC) and United Nations.

The FIB is currently deployed in North Kivu, in Beni Territory, an area which is inarguably the most volatile

region in the DRC. Apart from this, the region has also been affected by the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) which is the second most deadly outbreak in history killing nearly 2,000 people since August 2018, according to reports from the health ministry.

In the FIB Area of Responsibility (AOR) there are various AG, the most active of which are Mai-Mai (MM) and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). They mostly involved in cases of extortions, kidnappings, and killings especially in Beni-Butembo Region.

The ADF claims to be an Islamist group and has its origins in Western Uganda. It has been involved in various Human Rights Violations (HRV) in North Kivu including



Force Commander and FIB Commander disembarking from a MI 17 helicopter at Semuliki in North Kivu

numerous killings, abductions and looting of civilian property. The AG has also attacked, with bold determination, various FARDC camps in the AoR, killing scores of people, and looting weapons and equipment. Furthermore, the group is also blamed for attacks on UN Peacekeepers in the FIB's AoR. This has continued until November 2018 when the FIB launched an offensive operation against ADF in which the ADF suffered heavy casualties.

OPERATIONAL RESPONSE BY UNITS

Considering the threats in the AOR, the FIB adopted an enhanced pre-emptive battle rhythm in terms of posture and operations to ensure Protection of Civilians, which is the priority mandatory task for MONUSCO. As an illustration, the Brigade deployed Company Operating Bases (COBs) in the most risky and remote areas from where troops conduct day and night patrols.

Furthermore, FIB also employs Quick Reaction the Forces (QRF) which have managed to repel attacks and and/or mitigate damage in cases of attacks. Another proactive measure involves protection by projection in areas where FIB has no footprint in which Long Range Patrols (LRP) and



Tanzanian Special Force (TANZSF) troops during Operation Usalama Center



South African air assault teams patrolling over the jungle canopy of Beni



Force Commander and Northern Sector Commander discussing Zone of Operations in Blukwa Standing Combat Deployment

Standing Combat Deployments (SCD) are employed.

Besides its proactive posture, the FIB has successfully conducted, unilaterally or jointly with FARDC, targeted offensive operations against the AG. Some of the major operations conducted include Operation Phoenix

Rising which led to the surrender and subsequent repatriation of 54 Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR) combatants to Rwanda. Further to that, the FIB conducted Operation JUNGLE SHIELD, which restored public confidence in Rwenzori Commune; Operation

USALAMA SOUTH (2018), which led to the neutralization of the Mai-Mai's at Pabuka, in South of Beni; Operation USALAMA CENTER (2018) and Operation ATLAS (2019), aimed at neutralizing ADF in the general area of Mayangose Jungle. ■



South African soldier patrolling the volatile tracts of Beni territory



Indian troops conducting foot patrol

CENTRAL SECTOR

Central Sector is composed by an Indian Brigade, which comprises one INDRDB and two INDBAT. Its Area of Responsibility (AOR) covers large portions of North Kivu, a province

bordering Lake Kivu in the eastern DRC with Goma as the capital. North Kivu borders the provinces of Ituri to the North, Tshopo to the Northwest, Maniema to the Southwest and South Kivu to the South. To the east it borders

with Uganda and Rwanda. North Kivu province consists of three major cities Goma, Butembo and Beni; and five territories under the Central Sector: Lubero, Rutshuru, Masisi, Nyiragongo and Walikale.



Indian troops during Operation Blue Harmony VI



Indian troops conducting Operation Muhangi in Lubero

Operational Environment

Presently 34 Armed Groups (AGs) are active in North Kivu. Central Sector has deployed SCD, LRP & LRM to prevent and avert attacks on the civilian population and to avoid illegal activities in its AOR. The Sector has also supported in logistics and transportation and jointly operated with FARDC.

Operational Response

Central Sector have carried out SCD, HLADP, LRM, Day and Night Patrol & Joint Patrol in their AOR. The Sector also provide escorts, protect Human Rights, Child Protection and Conduct and Discipline teams when visiting the communities. Operations undertaken by Central Sector for the period from Mar 2018 to Mar 2019 are as follows :

- Extrication of Child Soldiers.
- OP KAVIRU by Lubero COB on 07 Sep 2018.
- OP MUHANGI by Lubero COB on 27 Nov 2018.
- Op Blue Harmony (I to VI).
- Op Blue Dawn II: NDC-R Vacated Kashugo.

Central Sector also conducted Quick Impact Projects (QIP), CIMIC activities and notable visits in its AOR. A series of QIP have been undertaken and completed by the Sector such as, Rain Water Harvesting, Construction of Toilets and classrooms in schools, solar lights illumination of villages, amongst others to address the concerns of locals. The Sector has coordination with various civil agencies and local leaderships. ■



Central Sector Commander Brigadier General Dinesh Singh inaugurating the "Rain Water Harvesting Project" to facilitate access to drinking water for the population of Kibati, North Kivu



Central Sector Brigade Commander during his visit to Kashugo near Lubero territory



Joint Patrol in Central Sector AOR



Pakistan Army contingent during medal presentation parade

SOUTHERN SECTOR

Southern Sector Area of Responsibility (AOR) spreads over an area of 694,467 Square Kms (28.5% of DRC). AOR comprises of large tract which is inaccessible, owing to negligible road infrastructure. High rainfall index further increases operational challenges. The troops present in the Southern Sector are from Pakistan, including its Headquarters, Pakistani Rapidly Deployable Battalion (PAKRDB), and two Pakistani Battalions (PAKBAT), Nepalese Battalion (NEPBAT), China Level II Hospital, and Indonesian Rapidly Deployable Battalion (INDORDB).

Operation Iron Hammer

In Northern Uvira Territory, the security situation is characterized by increasing Mai-Mai activities and FARDC operations against armed groups. On 14 July 2018, Head of Sub-Office in Uvira and two other MONUSCO international personnel were kidnapped on the Ruzuzi plain by unknown armed elements. Similarly, in April 18, a kidnapping occurred in same area.

As a quick response to that incident, MONUSCO personnel were released within 24 hours. Operation Iron Hammer was planned to convey a deterrent message



Nepalese soldiers patrolling in Southern Sector



SRSg during her visit to INDORDB in Southern Sector



Force Commander and Southern Sector Commander with Pakistani Lady officers of Female Engagement Teams

against abduction of MONUSCO staff. The Pakistani Battalion (PakBatt 3) conducted Operation Iron Hammer rapid deployments in Uvira and surrounding area to include scouring operations, establishing blocking positions/pickets on likely extrication points and conduct robust patrolling from 2 - 6 Aug 2018.

As outcomes, Operation Iron Hammer caused a degradation of Armed Groups' freedom of movement, demonstrated MONUSCO FORCE resolve and deterrent message against abduction of MONUSCO staff

Other contributions from Southern Sector

- In Tanganyika province, laying down of weapons on mass scale by AGs (approx. 600-700 Mai Mai Fimbo na Fimbo

elements) and their desire to join National mainstream (by settling down around villages) speak of improvement in security milieu.

- Actualization of Shabunda action plan by full support to MONUSCO initiatives for engaging/ treating rape victims as well as training and capacity building of FARDC.
- Effective ethnic conflict management in Uvira and Fizi (between Bunyamulenge and Bafuliru) by proactive deployments to prevent conflict between the communities and to support MONUSCO civil office.
- Effective checking of CNRD armed group movement from North Kivu to South Kivu in Kalehe territory by timely and effective deployments along with enabling MONUSCO civil office initiatives to engage CNRD cadres. ■



Force Commander awarding UN medals to Nepalese soldiers



Indonesian soldier battle drills during pre-deployment training

WESTERN SECTOR



Western Sector (WS) is composed of troops from Ghana, including HQ and Ghanaian Battalion (GHANBAT) and Moroccan Rapidly Deployable Battalion (MORRDB). The Uruguayan Company (URUCOY), the Bangladeshi and Egyptian Military Police are deployed within Western Sector's Area

of Responsibility (AOR) in Kinshasa. The sector AOR comprises 10 western provinces of DRC to include Kongo Central, Kasai, Ubangi, Equateur and Lumami. It covers an area of approximately 761,745 sq km having a population of approx. 35 million. The prominent challenges in the area of responsibility emerge from volatile political situation within Kinshasa and

proliferation of militia activities in Kasai region.

The routine patrols by contingents, medical assistance teams, female engagement teams, Formed Police Unit (FPU) and military observers from team sites have ensured UN presence to increase the confidence among the local populace and the international staff working in the AOR.

All the components of the Western Sector have worked tirelessly to achieve the UN mandate of Protection of Civilians through all challenges of the mission and will continue to do so in future.

The most important Armed Groups present are the Bana Mura, in the south and south west, and the Kamuina Nsapu (KN), located in the north-east and south-east of Kasais.

Operations

One of the main tasks of the WS considering its presence in Kinshasa is to protect the Mission Leadership and UN facilities in the Capital of the DRC.

During the election in Yumbi, GHANBAT deployed a platoon in the Plateaux District of Mai-Ndombe Province of DRC to provide a Standing Combat Deployment (SCD) to ensure safe working environment for the



Force Commander addressing GHANBAT troops



Moroccan armoured patrol

United Nations Joint Human Rights Office and Civil Affairs Mission for National Provincial Legislative Election monitoring at Yumbi.

During the election period, the Moroccan Rapidly Deployable Battalion (MORRDB) deployed an SCD at Mbuji Mayi on 21st December 2018, to show MONUSCO FORCE presence, for the protection of UN personnel and to intervene in case of escalation of the violence in the region.

In order to prevent ethnical and political conflicts, the MORRDB deployed SDC and Long Range Mission to provide Protection of Civilian (PoC) in Lodja and Lusambo, in Sankuru region, in April 2019.

Female Engagement Teams (FET)

The Sector has been active player in sensitizing the local environment on engagement of women at social level

and the delicate concern of women's health. As part of International Women's Day Celebration 2019, the Female Engagement Team of GHANBAT, organized Civilian-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) activities at the CEBCO Libisiki Health Centre at Kasa

Vubu in Kinshasa. Alongside with the men, the female personnel did not miss a single chance to improve their presence and integrity in the field and being equal to men by taking part in the MONUSCO peacekeeping operations. ■



Female members of GHANBAT discussing patrol routes



Patrol in the outskirts of Kinshasa

AVIATION



multidimensional operations, allowing them to implement their mandates.

Despite the recent reduction in the size of the fleet, due to the dynamic, demanding and urgent nature of these operations, as well as their often geographically and logistically challenging environments, missions have become increasingly dependent on helicopters to implement their mandates. The use of some of these assets (mainly attack helicopters) has been crucial in conducting military operations in recent crises.

UN military aviation assets are under Operation Control of the Force Commander, who further delegates his authority in certain respect, to designated sector commander for tactical control and utilization of aviation assets in the field. The military assets include rotary wing units, contributed by different Member States.

The deployment and tactical employment of these aviation assets is dependent on the task requirement, terrestrial limitation, ground support/ services availability and time limitation. This requires managing air assets and capabilities more in terms of their strategic potential. At present, MONUSCO aviation assets are distributed in accordance with the tactical division of DRC (Northern, FIB, Central, Western and Southern Sectors) with major emphasis on the strategically sensitive eastern area of Congo.

Operational success is always subject to how mission's air assets are organized, generated, managed, tasked, controlled, and commanded. Aviation units have played a pivotal role in achieving marked success not only in strategic operations but also in maintaining peace and security.

During 2018, MONUSCO aviation units (all rotary wing) has flown around 8000 hours, transporting around 38896 troops and 1584.374 tons of cargo through 3248 troops and 1799 cargo/ fuel insertion, extraction and resupply sorties. Aircrafts have undertaken around 3693 patrol/ observation/ surveillance sorties in the region and provided assistance through around 301 MEDEVAC /CASEVAC operations. ■

Air assets have been used since the beginning of peacekeeping operations to supply troops, conduct surveillance and monitoring, provide logistics support, and move around assets and personnel. Aviation assets, which include fixed-wing aircrafts, utility and attack helicopters, and unmanned aerial systems, are key enablers that give peace operations the mobility and agility they need to deter and prevail against hostile actors. They are also force multipliers that enhance the effectiveness of



RSA Attack Helicopter - MONUSCO



Bangladeshi female pilots proudly serving the UN

Bangladeshi Utility Aviation Unit

Bangladeshi Utility Aviation Unit (BANUAU) has been deployed to Bunia since Oct 2003 with 05 X Mi-17 Long Range Utility helicopters and Aircrews. In 2010, an additional Mi-17 joined

its fleet. Bunia is the Main Operating Base (MOB) and it has a detachment at Dungu. BANUAU is ready and capable of carrying out any sort of operational task including the redeployment to any place

in DRC as per the terms and conditions of LOA. It may be mentioned here that, in the absence of any road, railway or river link, the air assets of BANUAU are playing the most crucial role in implementing

the MONUSCO Mandate in the Northern Sector generally. Very often, the Unit is to deploy elsewhere in different other Sectors in order to meet any need.

The general terrain, elevation of helicopter landing sites (HLS) in most of

the places, sudden and unpredictable weather phenomenon, prevailing ground threat particular to Northern Sector and adjoining Lake Albert Littorals, availability of friendly troops on ground to secure HLS, unavailability

of emergency landing sites in most of the areas of operation, distorted air-to-ground radio communication etc. continue to pose vital challenges in the operations of BANUAU.



C-130 aircraft during logistics support



C-130 aircraft during logistics support

Pakistani Aviation Unit

Pakistani Aviation Unit has been deployed in DRC since 2011 along with its 03 x Puma SA 330L utility / Cargo Helicopters. In DRC, the main operating station is Kavumu (Bukavu) from where it provides aviation support to MONUSCO in South Kivu Province area and the whole DRC in general whenever required. The unit has performed well under extreme challenges of terrain, weather and hostile elements and has proven to be one of the best outfits of MONUSCO which can be relied upon and given operational tasks in extreme conditions.

The general terrain of Sud Kivu is characterized by mountains, Lake Kivu and Tanganyika, rough and unpredictable weather, thick jungle to the west and close proximity to the international border on the east that continues to pose ever increasing challenges for aviation operations in the region. Nevertheless, Pakistani Aviation has been well trained against war on terror for more than one and a half decade in Pakistan in equally challenging environments and continues to operate to its best of abilities and determination.

South African Aviation Unit

On April 2019, 2 X Oryx helicopters, from RSA Goma Aviation Composite Helicopter Unit were tasked to extract previously captured child soldiers from Mpati area in the DRC. As a country that views and supports the DDR process, implemented to aid those who have been captured and forced to serve an ideology that is not yet comprehensible to a minor, the unit took pride in executing such a task. A total of 110 child soldiers were transported successful from Mpati

area to Goma town where the DDR/RR process has been facilitated by trained professionals in service of the UN. Part of the mandate of the Composite Helicopter Unit includes the medical evacuation of casualties from the different areas of the North and South Kivu provinces.

As an indication to show the significant contribution of the RSA Aviation Unit, MONUSCO Force Commander Lt Gen Elias Martins Filho awarded UN Medals to the troops

on a medal parade ceremony held in Goma, at MONUSCO Aviation parade ground on 22 September 2018. A total of 60 Aviation troops were awarded the medals in recognition of the meritorious service that they have carried out in DRC towards protection of civilians. During the ceremony, the Force Commander reiterated that the Aviation units plays a significant role in airlifting troops to areas that are otherwise inaccessible in the DRC.

Ukrainian Aviation Unit

The first Ukrainian Aviation troops were deployed in DRC under MONUSCO on 12 February 2012. Since this year up to 2019 eight rotations of the contingent have been completed. During this period of deployment, Ukrainian pilots have spent in the Congolese sky more than 20415 hours; they have executed more than 18415 flights, transported about 69415 passengers and 3128 tons of cargo. ■



FORCE ENGINEERS



Indonesian Engineer Company during road construction

MONUSCO Force Engineers Contingents are comprised of the Bangladesh, the Chinese, the Indonesian and the Nepalese Engineer Companies. In the recent past, they have carried out several field engineering support missions that include construction of new roads and bridges, rehabilitation of existing roads and bridges, expansion and maintenance of the local airports, provision of medical assistance in respective areas of responsibilities, construction of medical facilities that support the locals with medical services, including in combating the Ebola virus disease in DRC. All these activities carried out by the MONUSCO Force Engineers have impacted positively on the improvement of living standards of the DRC people and subsequently complemented on the peace building efforts that are geared towards the fulfilment of the Mission Mandate.

Besides, those works are representative of a legacy that the

Force can provide for this Country. In Ituri territory, for example, some of the remarkable tasks carried out by the MONUSCO engineers that directly support the locals include: rehabilitation of Dungu-Duru road, covering 17 kilometers; construction of Ebola Treatment Center in Mangina and subsequent rehabilitation and expansion of the access road to the Ebola Treatment Centre.

The engineers have carried out myriad of quick impact projects from construction of open stadium to construction of schools and bridges that have a positive impact on the lives of the DRC people. The recent tasks carried out by the engineers include, construction of office buildings, toilets, leveling and preparation of the school compound in Bogoro.

Additionally, the MONUSCO Force Engineers supports the Civil - Military Cooperation activities by engaging in medical assistance that were conducted in the months of April and May 2018 and helped 688 people in the region.

The recent support given to the locals include medical assistance to Rwampara school in Bunia, distribution of stationary items like books and pens to pupils of the school and firefighting in case of fire incidents in Bunia town.

In North Kivu region, engineering works have been carried out by the MONUSCO Force. These include the rehabilitation of the roads that link MONUSCO offices and camps in Goma town. The rehabilitated roads support both the local people and MONUSCO personnel in transport services, for instance, in Goma locals benefit in terms of transportation of business commodities to the market.

Rehabilitation of the Kitchanga bridge with ferroconcrete

The rehabilitated Kitchanga bridge which is a class one bridge, facilitates the transportation of locals and commodities to the local markets. The engineers' troops also support local communities with medical assistance and firefighting equipment in case of fire outbreaks like the fire incident that occurred in Mushake Bazar on 28 May 2018.

In Beni territory, the MONUSCO Force engineers have conducted various tasks aimed at supporting the locals. These include the repair of the Luna bridge in which the wooden plate and steel crossbar were used for the repair; rehabilitation of Lubero-Kagheri-Kashugo road covering a distance of 12 kilometers; strengthening and maintenance of bridges along the same road that help both MONUSCO and locals in the transportation of logistics; and rehabilitation of Kamango - Semuliki road covering 18 kilometers, among others. ■



rehabilitation of Dungu-Duru road



Nepalese Engineers Company during bridge maintenance

FORCE RESERVE SPECIAL FORCES

Sake, North-Kivu : Guatemalan Special Force Contingent (GUASFOR) carried out training in readiness for future operations against negative forces in July 2017



The MONUSCO Force has three Special Forces Companies from Guatemala, Tanzania and Egypt as part of its Reserve. The Guatemalan Special Forces Company (GUASFOR) is a noble asset to the MONUSCO Force due to its capabilities to perform special tasks such as Air and Field Specialized Recces, Air Operations, as well as Special Operations in Mountain and Jungle Areas. In fact, GUASFOR has taken part in all offensive operations carried out by the Force Intervention Brigade to neutralize armed groups and to protect civilians inside eastern DRC.

The Tanzanian Special Forces Company (TANZSF) has conducted frequent dominance patrols in SIMULIKE and MAVIVI aimed at monitoring the security situation. The

presence of its troopers instills confidence in the locals to conduct their daily activities. Its high performance on the ground derives from their professionalism and the regular training on Escort and Patrol duties, VVIP Protection, weapon handling, Airborne and Jungle Operations.

Strategically located in South Kivu province, the Egyptian Special Forces Company (EGYSF) has been tasked to enhance the MONUSCO capabilities in the southeastern border area of DRC. Its readiness, commitment and willingness to fight make this sub-unit a force multiplier and important tool to neutralize armed groups that pose threats to the Congolese population. In that regard, EGYSF had an important role in the Force response to the Mai Mai surge in Nyunzu area. ■



Force Commander inspects EGYSF equipment



TANZSF troops during operation Usalama Centre



FORCE RESERVE - URUBAT

As part of the Force Reserve, the Uruguayan Battalion (URUBAT) is one of the most traditional contingents which is contributing to the fulfilment of the UN Mandate in DRC. Uruguayan peacekeepers are

currently deployed in Western and Central Sectors as well as within the FIB area of responsibility. Their precise and quick responses, professionalism and kind approach to the population have contributed to the peace process in the DR Congo. ■

Civilian-Military Cooperation (CIMIC)

MONUSCO peacekeeping operations undertake CIMIC for two reasons – first, to support management of the operational and tactical interaction between military and civilian actors; and second, to support creating an

enabling environment for the implementation of the Mission mandate by maximizing the cooperative advantage of all actors operating in the mission area.

The level of coordination by G-9 Section at Force HQ level with all CIMIC officers of Sectors and Force Intervention Brigade and civilian components is very motivating in support of the mission objectives.

One of the visible faces of CIMIC activities are the Quick Impact Projects (QIP). They are small-scale, rapidly implementable projects of benefit to the population. They are funded through the Mission budget and are used by the Force to establish and build confidence in the Mission, its mandate, and the peace process, thereby improving the environment for effective mandate implementation. Rehabilitation of the maternity room of Mandombe Health Center in Kisangani (Central Sector), delivery of a water point in Kamako (Western Sector), rehabilitation of Shanje-Butumba Primary School (Southern Sector) and installation of solar lighting pylons in NZUMA district of Beni are some of the QIPs throughout the country. ■



CIMIC activities undertaken by Force HQ at Goma



Work session between MONUSCO and FARDC officers as part of collaboration in the field

Collaboration between FARDC and MONUSCO Force in Joint and Coordinated Operations

MONUSCO's mandate, which is very clear regarding this necessary collaboration, urges it "to work with the Government of the DRC and humanitarian workers to identify threats to civilians and implement existing prevention and response plans and strengthen civil military cooperation, including joint planning to ensure the protection of civilians from abuses and violations of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law, including all forms of sexual and gender-based violence and violations and abuses committed against children and persons with disabilities, and to accelerate the coordinated implementation of monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements".

The Force's planned stabilization interventions includes targeted offensive operations through the Intervention Brigade with the support of the whole of MONUSCO, either unilaterally or jointly with the FARDC. However, conducting operations against any armed group (AG) is more than a unilateral or joint operation with FARDC at any given time. Most often, the Force will provide support to the FARDC with MONUSCO's assets to enable them in the conduct of their operations and ensure the protection

of civilians. For instance, the Force will conduct joint air reconnaissance with FARDC planners to maintain their situational awareness of the area and prepare for future operations. Support to the FARDC is diversified and depends on timely requests from the FARDC and availability of the MONUSCO assets. This includes, but is not limited to, casualty evacuation, transportation of supplies, movement of personnel and air support from the attack aviation.

Along with MONUSCO's operations, FARDC's operations are instrumental to weakening, maintaining pressure

and neutralizing Armed Groups. The partnership between MONUSCO and FARDC is not only defined by joint operations and planning but by effective collaboration between the two partners. To achieve that level of collaboration, the Force is striving to enhance communications with FARDC to mutually develop goals for conducting future operations and ensuring the Force and FARDC disposition better align thereby contributing to the restoration of peace and stability in the DRC. ■



CELEBRATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF UN PEACEKEEPERS 2019

In Beni, tribute to fallen troops with a specific mention for the Malawian soldier Chitete who died heroically

While the official International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers is every year on 29 May, the Day was observed on Friday, 31st May in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In Beni, in the north-east of the country, where an official ceremony was held, or in Bukavu, in the south-east, or in Kananga, in the central Kasai region, the event similarly met with much interest on the part of local people who turned out to show their respect and admiration for the UN troops who, every day, risk their lives so that the DRC will again enjoy peace and move towards development.

Alain Coulibaly, Alain Likota, Laurent Sam Oussou / MONUSCO

In Beni, the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers was marked with a solemn ceremony that included the performance of the DRC's and UN's anthems, an inspection of the troops, and a wreath laying in respect for fallen soldiers. A series of speeches then followed, with the first two ones delivered by the mayor of Beni city and the DRC Armed Forces (FARDC) commander who both hailed the support of the UN Force in tracking

down rebel troops who have been spreading death in the area. On behalf of the FARDC, the commander paid tribute to their UN « bothers-in-arms » who died alongside them in the cause of peace, praising their sense of sacrifice.

Over a thousand people attended this UN Peacekeepers' Day commemoration ceremony at Mabakanga Institute in the Boikene neighbourhood of Beni city on May 31st.

The UN was represented by the Deputy Special

Representative of the Secretary-General for Operations and the Rule of Law, David Gressly, and the MONUSCO Head of office in Beni, Omar Aboud. In their respective remarks, they praised the courage and bravery of these “soldiers of peace”, men and women, who strive tirelessly, risking their lives for peace to prevail in the DRC.

Mr. Gressly paid tribute to the seven peacekeepers who died last year while fighting ADF rebels. “Private Chitete and six other peacekeepers were killed during Operation Usalama last November, which operation proved critical in driving the ADF away from Beni,” he said, adding that “This allowed for the city of Beni to be safe enough for Ebola response activities to continue.” David Gressly concluded saying that today “the Ebola virus disease represents a major threat but remains under control in the Beni region, thanks to the courage and sacrifice of all the peacekeepers involved in this operation, and the collaboration and efforts of the communities in Beni”.

It is worth recalling that late Private Chancy Chitete of Malawi was killed on November 14, 2018, while trying to rescue one of his comrades. For that reason, he was posthumously awarded the “Captain Mbaye Diagne Medal for Exceptional Bravery”. He became the first recipient of the Diagne Medal, which is named after a Senegalese peacekeeper who was killed in Rwanda in 1994 after saving countless civilian lives.

After the speeches, the ceremony continued with a parade of FARDC and FIB troops, and Congolese National Police with MONUSCO Formed Police Units.

There then followed a presentation of examples of success stories in the protection of civilians, showcasing how good collaboration in the sharing of information and alerts between the different civilian and military components can lead to military successes.

Finally, artistic and cultural events were performed by various contingents as well as the students from two local Institutes, extolling the notions of peace and human rights, to wrap up the Peacekeepers’ Day.

In Bukavu, South Kivu, during the commemoration ceremony of UN



Deputy SRSR David Gressly inspecting troops during Peacekeepers’ Day celebration in Beni on 31 May 2019

Peacekeepers’ Day, the Vice Governor of this province, Fiston Malago laid a wreath to honour the sacrifice of the Malawian soldier Chancy Chitete.

In Kananga “these unsung heroes” were celebrated too.

“Many UN peacekeepers, these unsung heroes, sacrificed, and continue to sacrifice, their precious lives for the noble cause of protecting civilians and peace around the world and in a special way in the Democratic Republic of Congo”. These were the words of Ambroise Kamukuny, the Vice Governor of Kasai-Central Province, as he summarized the work of UN peacekeepers in the DRC, from ONUC (whose actions in the 1960s helped to bring an end to the secession of Katanga) to MONUC to MONUSCO. He was speaking in Kananga during the commemorative ceremony of the International Day of UN Peacekeepers held at MONUSCO headquarters.

In the presence of an audience of invited guests consisting of politico-administrative, military and police authorities, civil society representatives, and United Nations staff led by the deputy head of Office, Vice Governor Ambroise Kamukuny explained that the theme of this 71st International Day of UN peacekeepers made perfect sense, especially here in Kasai-Central where “the work of UN peacekeepers has been decisive in restoring and keeping peace, and in protecting civilians”.

Recalling the tragic death of two UN experts while on duty in Kasai-Central, the vice governor stressed that “Despite a bleak picture, we are hopeful that this struggle for the protection of civilians and

the search for peace will remain a central focus...” of MONUSCO’s mission.

Also speaking at the occasion, the deputy head of MONUSCO Office in Kananga, Leopold Gnonke talked about the Mission’s activities as regards the protection of civilians in the region. He mentioned in particular the support to the Customary Conflict Resolution Advisory Committee to the tune of about 100 thousand dollars, the setting up and training of members of the local protection committees, several intercommunity dialogue initiatives, community violence reduction projects that accompany the DDR programme for ex-militiamen, including, for example, the rehabilitation of the communal house of Nganza (Kananga).

Mr. Gnonke also cited the actions of the Moroccan peacekeepers deployed across the Kasai region, the alert mechanisms in place and other actions for the removal of children from militia groups and their social reintegration. In addition, there is the conduct of human rights protection actions and awareness raising and training activities to strengthen the capacity of state institutions and local associations in order to ensure that such activities will continue after MONUSCO’s departure.

The ceremony supervised by the Kananga-based Moroccan contingent of the MONUSCO Force concluded with the laying of wreaths in honour of fallen UN peacekeepers.

Other activities for the Day included a donation of food by the Moroccan contingent to the Bon Berger hospital in Tshikaji, Kananga. ■

PROTECTING CIVILIANS PROTECTING PEACE

29 May International Day of UN Peacekeepers



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