

REPORT ON NGANDA I WORKSHOP



**Woodrow Wilson
International Center
for Scholars**

The Inaugural Workshop of the DRC Leadership Training Initiative

Held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo
from January 17th to 21st, 2006

Report Author:

Howard Wolpe, *Africa Program Director*
Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

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Training Team and Principal Staff

DR. HOWARD WOLPE, *Director, Africa Program and Leadership Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars*

Contact: howard.wolpe@wilsoncenter.org ; +1.202.691.4046

Background: Former seven-term Member of Congress and was Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region for President Clinton. A specialist in African politics, Wolpe chaired the Subcommittee on Africa of the House Foreign Affairs Committee for ten of his fourteen years in the Congress. Wolpe has taught at Western Michigan University in the Political Science Department and at the University of Michigan in the Institute of Public Policy Studies, and he has served as a Visiting Fellow in the Foreign Policy Studies Program of the Brookings Institution, as a Woodrow Wilson Center Public Policy Scholar, and as a consultant to the World Bank and to the Foreign Service Institute of the U.S. State Department.

STEVEN McDONALD, *Consulting, Project Manager, Africa Program and Leadership Project. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars*

Contact: stevem@acus.org ; +1 301.952.9878

Background: Former Executive Vice President of the African-American Institute (AAI), where he was responsible for running the Institute's policy programs, including its Congressional Affairs Program, African Leader Program, and Democracy and Governance Program. AAI had offices in twenty-four African countries under McDonald's supervision. Before coming to AAI, McDonald was Associate Director for the Aspen Institute's Southern Africa Policy Forum, and a U.S. Foreign Service Officer in South Africa, Uganda, and Washington, D.C.

DR. ALAIN LEMPEREUR, *Director, Institute for Research and Education on Negotiation in Europe*

Contact: lempereur@essec.fr; +33.1.30.75.93.27

Background: Professor and research center director at ESSEC Business School. Has led consulting missions, conferences, and training sessions on negotiation and mediation for government and international organization officials and diplomats, as well as for the business community. He has developed negotiation seminars for ESSEC, the Universities of Paris – Sorbonne - II & V, ENA, and also in continuing education, namely for the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, World Health Organization, the World Bank, the BCG, and McKinsey. He has also served as a facilitator for expert meetings in conflict prevention, as well as for resource mobilization and for other diverse private and public

consultations. He is the author of multiple books on negotiation theory and methods.

MICHEL NOURREDINE KASSA, *Coordinator, Initiative Pour le Leadership Col boratif et la Cohesion de l'Etat en RDC*

Contact: mnkassa@yahoo.fr ; +243.8.10.15.87.89

Background: Senior Emergency Officer and Associate Chief of Section (Southern, Central & North Africa, Middle East and Afghanistan) in the Coordination and Response Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Previously spent eight and a half years at the United Nations Development Program, and served in Zaire and the DRC with OCHA. Has also served as head of mission for Médecins Sans Frontières in Haiti and South Africa, electoral observer for the European Union and South Africa, administrator for the Editions Autrement publishing company, and head of mission for Action Against Hunger in Baluchistan, Pakistan.

MONIQUE KAHUMBA KIBONGE, *Deputy Coordinator, Initiative Pour le Leadership Collaboratif et la Cohesion de l'Etat en RDC*

Contact: nicettel@yahoo.fr ; +243.8.10.15.87.73

Background: Served five years with the United Nations in the DRC, including as a National Expert with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the DRC. She also served with the United Nations Development Program's Economic Unit and Elections Project. Before joining the ILCCE, she served in multiple managerial and administrative capacities in the American private sector.

FATHER MARTIN EKWA BIS ISAL, SJ, *Senior Advisor, Initiative Pour le Leadership Collaboratif et la Cohesion de l'Etat en RDC*

Contact : ekwasj@hotmail.com; +243.8.18.12.65.12

Background: General Secretary of Centre Chrétien d'Action pour Dirigeants et Cadres d'Entreprise au Congo. He is one of the principle architects of the Congolese educational system, having served as President of the National Catholic Education Office for the DRC the country's first 14 years of independence. He later served as Regional Secretary for Catholic Teaching in Africa and Madagascar, and as Secretary-General of the International Office of Catholic Teaching. He is the recipient of numerous national, regional and international awards. His recent book, *L'Ecole Trahie* was published in September, 2004.

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“Women and men of quality, you may be regarded as so without even knowing it, but those who chose you know of your quality. They hold you high in regard and believe in your abilities, looking upon you as the daughters and sons of the same mother. This is the reason for their trust in you. The mother of a large family whose children have various talents and whose life plans differ, can count statesmen, businessmen, military servicemen, men of faith and handicapped persons amongst her offspring. To her, they are all her children. As for them, they all come together and convene around the mother. They all recognize themselves in the eyes of the mother and can muster there the affection that they express for others. For all of them, the mother is sacred. They become aware of her problems, live with them and deal with them together.”

-- From Remarks by Father Martin Ekwa at the Opening of the Leadership Retreat

Project Background

In response to the invitation of diplomats and the encouragement of a cross-section of Congolese leaders, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, in partnership with ESSEC's Institute on Research and Negotiations in Europe (IRENE), has launched a two-year leadership training initiative in the DRC. This initiative, modeled on the successful Burundi Leadership Training Program, a Wilson Center training initiative supported by the World Bank's Post Conflict Fund, the UK's Department for International Development, the European Commission and USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives, and developed in partnership with IRENE and with the Conflict Management Group, seeks to build collaborative capacity among Congolese leaders and to strengthen the cohesion and capacity of the fragile Congolese state.

The two-year strategy document that informs the project and that has been circulated among donors envisions the constitution over the next several months of five “training groups” of 35-40 strategically selected participants, each group targeting different social and institutional sectors. Each training group would participate in an inaugural five-to-six training retreat, and would be re-convened periodically in follow-on workshops designed to reinforce the skills learned and to strengthen the personal relationships among participants. It is intended that the two-year training initiative will facilitate the building of a cohesive national leadership network, whose members will be capable of working effectively together across all the lines of ethnic, regional and political division.

This workshop represented the first of those five select training groups and was comprised of a mixed group of key leaders drawn from diverse social and institutional sectors. While participants were invited in their individual capacities, not as representatives of their respective organizations and institutions, it was intended that, in its composition, the initial workshop group would be representative of the regional, political and institutional diversity of the national society. Over several weeks, consultations were held by Project Director Howard Wolpe and Country Team Leader Michel Kassa with a large number of Congolese leaders, from all sectors, to identify persons who the Congolese believed to be key to their future, for better or for worse.

It was initially intended that the workshop would be held in a retreat setting some distance from Kinshasa, in order to remove participants from the distractions of home and office and to permit greater social interaction over the period of the retreat. However, it quickly became clear that, given the intensity of parliamentary and other activity related to the pending March election, this would not be practical, if we were to secure the participation of the high-ranking leaders that we sought. Consequently, the workshop was re-located in the Catholic Nganda Retreat Center; because of the parliamentary schedule, it was also required that the workshop hours be reduced somewhat. In the end, the workshop ran over five days – Tuesday through Saturday. On every day except Thursday the workshop was scheduled from 9am – 2pm; on Thursday, to accommodate an all-day simulation exercise, the workshop ran all day, from 9am – 6:30pm.

Working Group Composition and Attendance

The response to the invitations that were extended to workshop participants was generally positive – as is demonstrated by workshop’s final composition. Over the course of the five-day training, 36 persons participated in some portion of the workshop activity. On no day were there fewer than 27 participants present; and on two days, attendance was 30 or higher. (Our original goal was to secure the participation of 35-40 key leaders in the initial workshop.) The high level of attendance over the five days was remarkable, given the convening of an Extraordinary Session of the Parliament during this same period to consider the Electoral Law and renewed violence in the North Kivu region, requiring the attention of several participants.

We were successful in recruiting to the program a very diverse group of key leaders, drawn from multiple political and social arenas. Our participants included a Vice-President (Azarias Ruberwa), the President of the National Assembly (Olivier Kamitatu), and key advisers and/or deputies to President Kabila (e.g., Samba Kaputo, Andre Kapanga), Vice-President Bemba, and UDPS President Etienne Tshitseki. Indeed, almost all of the principal Congolese political interests were represented at very high levels. On the advice both of diplomats and some Congolese interlocutors, we targeted for inclusion in this initial “mixed leaders” training group, some of the key belligerents in the volatile Kivus (North and South) and the increasingly tense Katanga Province. Thus, our participants included, among others, Gabriel Kyungu Wakumwanza, the former Governor of Katanga and Jean-Claude Muyambo, the Attorney General of Katanga Province and former head of Solidarité Katangaise; Eugene Serafuli, the RCD-Goma

Governor of North Kivu; Leonard Mashako Mamba, a North Kivuan leader affiliated with the PPRD and a former Minister of Health; Mbusi Nyarugabo, president of the RCD parliamentarians; and Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi, a North Kivuan and Minister of Economic Cooperation. Participants also included a number of key church leaders, such as Jean-Pierre Badidike, the Head of Procure of the Kisangani Archdiocese and a close associate of Archbishop Monsangwo; Professor Andre Masiala ma Solo, a Protestant church leader; and Agrey Ngalasi, head of the evangelical Eglise du Reveil; a former Zairean army general and dissenter, General Lazare Boteti; two prominent businessmen, a well-known television journalist, the head of a polling firm, several academics, and an artist. See Appendix I for a complete list of participants and a description of their backgrounds.

The letter of invitation to participants (see Appendix II) made it explicit that participants were being invited to participate in the new initiative because they had been identified by several Congolese as key to the future of the DRC. It was emphasized that they were being invited in their individual capacities, not as representatives of their organizations; and that the training program, designed to strengthen collaborative leadership and the cohesion of the Congolese state, was conceived as a long-term program, not as a one-off workshop.

Agenda and Methodology

The five-day workshop agenda featured a variety of simulations and other interactive exercises designed to strengthen the skills of communication, negotiation, group problem-solving, and conflict analysis. The fundamental workshop goal was to help transform the way in which participants define their self-interest, so that they can see their long-term security and welfare as being not in opposition to, but directly dependent upon, the larger collectivity of which they are a part. This requires understanding the concept of “interest-based negotiations,” in which decision makers distinguish between their “positions” or idealized aspirations, on the one hand, and their underlying “interests” or fundamental needs, on the other. Sustainable decisions are far more likely to result from a decision-making process that turns not on attempts to impose one’s position on others but, instead, on the search for means of accommodating the priority interests of all.

Another principal training objective is to form a climate of mutual trust. This is because sustainable agreements among competing parties require not only a sense of shared interests but also a set of working human relationships. This means seeing each other as individuals and not merely as members of hostile groups, and learning truly to “hear” the other’s point of view and stand in the other’s shoes.

Effective communication is a major focus. Participants learn the role that communication plays in developing or destroying trust (that messages can be meant in one way and received in another), the danger of acting on the basis of untested assumptions, and the ways in which the method of decision-making and the distribution of resources can affect inter-group attitudes. A powerful lesson emerging from simulations to which the leaders

are exposed is that durable solutions to issues driving conflict can only be found through inclusive, participant-based processes. Exclusion or discrimination is almost always a formula for suspicion and conflict.¹ The full workshop agenda is presented at Appendix III.

Workshop Highlights

The appendices include a complete description of the various workshop modules, including the power point slides used by Trainer Alain Lempereur in guiding the discussion of the various exercises and decision-making tools, as well as the work-product of the participants themselves. In this section, we wish to present only a few of the workshop highlights that convey some sense of the training experience.

The Use of First Names

It is our practice to employ only first names in all training workshops – in order to establish an atmosphere of informality, and to reduce the distance between participants that ranks and titles tend to create. Participants and members of the training team, in fact, wear hanging name tags bearing only their first names throughout the five days. Moreover, people are seated in a circle; there is no pre-arranged seating, and no special places reserved for persons of high rank.

Counter-intuitively perhaps, given the keen rank-sensitivity of most Congolese, not a single Congolese participant, notwithstanding his or her high status, objected to the exclusive use of first names throughout the week. It was not Mr. Vice President, but Azarias; not Mr. President, but Olivier; not Father Badadike, but Jean-Pierre. In fact, the participants rejoiced in this shattering of the formal straightjackets that usually govern their interactions. In the feedback that followed the training, several participants commented on the utility of the use of first names in “breaking the ice.”

Petrol Pricing: Collaboration vs. Competition

Following welcoming remarks and a description of the leadership initiative’s origins and purpose, the participants were plunged immediately into a simulation, known as The Price of Petrol. The simulation, involving two oil producing countries that must establish the price at which they will sell their oil on the world market, is designed to demonstrate that self-interest may be more effectively protected through collaborative rather than competitive strategies. Thus, two countries that have confidence that neither will try to under-sell the other will be able to maintain high prices and high profitability; however, if there is an absence of mutual trust and confidence, there is a tendency for one or both countries to opt for a pricing strategy that minimizes risk but also yields much lower

¹ For a more complete explication of the training methodology, see Wolpe, Howard et al. 2004. “Rebuilding Peace and State Capacity in War-torn Burundi.” *The Roundtable*, Vol. 93, No. 375, 457-467; and Wolpe, Howard and McDonald, Steve, “Training Leaders for Peace,” *The Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 126-132, January 2006.

returns. Corollary lessons that emerge from this exercise are the importance of understanding the point of view of the other – i.e., of putting yourself in the shoes of the other – of the danger of sending messages that may be misunderstood and have the unintended consequence of elevating suspicion and mistrust, of the danger of acting upon the basis of untested assumptions. (The power point presentation developing the lessons of the Petrol Pricing simulation are presented in Appendix IV).

The feed-back session that followed the negotiating exercise was extremely lively, with participants describing their perceptions of their negotiating partners, and analyzing the (often counter-productive) negotiating strategies they had pursued.

Participant Expectations

The Petrol Pricing exercise turned into a major ice-breaker for the workshop – with many of the participants finding themselves allied, in the course of the simulation, with persons that they either had not previously known or with whom they had been previously antagonistic. Moreover, they appeared quite taken by the simulation exercise, finding it quite different from anything they had previously experienced. Consequently, when the participants were subsequently asked to identify their own expectations for the workshop, they were quite relaxed and open in stating their hopes and aspirations for the remainder of the training experience. Their expectations, presented in their entirety in Appendix V, sounded five principal themes:

- To bring the participants closer together – to come to know one another in order “to get past the prejudices and sterile antagonisms,” to communicate better and diminish misunderstandings,” “to give us confidence and develop confidence between us,” “to better anticipate the reactions of the other,” and to ensure “that an adversary is not necessarily an enemy.” In the words of one participant, “. . .only the mountains never meet.”
- To contribute to our abilities – to lead groups with diverse interests, to reconcile a competitive logic with the concern of “winning together”; to develop a better awareness of common interests that should come ahead of one’s own interest; to develop a way of working for a common cause, such as the construction of a nation; to develop humility in the ruling class, and to combat violence and arrogance.
- To learn how to more constructively manage competition and conflict – by learning “to win without ‘triumphalism’ . . .without the need to bring the other to his knees,” and “to lose without humiliation”; and by learning “to accept personal defeat in the interests of the country.”
- To jointly address the challenges of rebuilding the DRC, notwithstanding our differences – by developing a national leadership cadre “that will work for the benefit of the population and the cohesion of the DRC”; by developing policies more in tune with the population, “particularly with respect to the Electoral Law”;

by enabling Congolese to learn how to conduct a dialogue among themselves without the need of foreigners.

- To assure a follow-up to the workshop to preserve the common interest and a better national spirit – by publicizing this initiative, by passing on what has been learned to our respective constituencies, by making certain that actual deeds do not contradict verbal promises, by installing a “permanent dialogue” among Congolese leaders, by helping the grassroots reconcile their different interests, and by affirming that every Congolese enjoys the same ancestral national heritage.

Ten Element Framework For Decision-Making

Following the identification of participant expectations, Trainer Lempereur turned to the question of how to approach a negotiation involving persons with diverse interests and perspectives. The first, second and third keys to successful negotiations, he stressed, is “to prepare, to prepare, to prepare.” And, he continued, that preparation should revolve around ten variables that must be considered if one seeks to develop sustainable agreements among diverse interests and perspectives. These ten elements, fully elaborated in Appendix VI, can be grouped in terms of the three dimensions central to any negotiation: **who** needs to be considered, **what** is the negotiation about, and **how** will the negotiation be conducted:

- The “who” of any negotiation involves a consideration of
 1. the *interpersonal relationships* among those involved in the negotiation,
 2. the *mandate* that the negotiators have received, and
 3. the *mapping of relationships* among all the actors that bear upon the issues at stake in the negotiation.
- The “what” refers to
 4. the fundamental *interests* and *motivation* that are at stake (as distinct from the *positions* that the actors may espouse),
 5. the identification of possible *solutions that can be reached at the negotiating table*,
 6. a comparison of solutions “at the table” with *solutions away from the table*, and
 7. the *criteria of legitimacy or justification* that can be invoked to assess the merit of alternative courses of action.
- Finally, the “how” relates to a consideration of

8. the *process* by which decisions will be made,
9. the nature of the *communications* among the parties, and
10. the *logistical arrangements* for the negotiation.

Following the presentation of this framework, the participants were asked to test its utility by preparing for another negotiation – this time involving a conflict within a hypothetical country, Mibura, between the national government and a rebellious province. Participants were divided into two groups, and they prepared for one-on-one negotiations using the ten-element framework. They then were given a short period to conduct an actual negotiation, following which an extended feedback session elicited further commentary on the importance of adequate and systematic preparation, and on the factors that contributed to a successful or unsuccessful negotiation.

Active Communications – Building a Consensus

Effective interest-based negotiation depends on both a recognition of common or shared interests, and on working relationships where leaders have the confidence that it is in fact possible to negotiate sustainable agreements with persons whose interests may be quite different from their own. This, in turn, requires the ability of individuals to communicate with, and to trust, one another. They must be able to see each other not as members of hostile groups or blocs, but as individuals, each with their own fears and aspirations, their own feelings and perceptions. Each participant must be able to really “hear” the point of view of “the other,” and to place him or herself in the shoes of the other. Several workshop exercises therefore seek to strengthen the ability of participants to communicate effectively with one another.

Demonstrating the difficulty inherent in all human communications, participants were first introduced to “***The Rumor***” exercise – wherein they were asked to whisper a short report – involving an automobile accident – to one another. By the time the whispered report had gone around the circle of participants it had been greatly distorted, and bore little relationship to the initial message that had begun the whispering chain. While a cause for collective amusement, the participants did not miss the essential lesson: human communication is fraught with distortion – either because people do not speak with precision, or because they do not listen very carefully, or because memory and perception are affected by inaccurate assumptions and/or stereotypes.

The next exercise to which the participants were exposed, “***The Woman***,” is designed both to demonstrate the power of conditioning on perceptions and to strengthen participants’ communication skills. At the beginning of the exercise, each participant is provided with a card displaying the image of a woman. After briefly viewing the card, the participants are then asked to estimate the age of a woman whose image is projected on a screen. As is customary, participant estimations ranged from 18-90 years old; and, almost without exception, each participant expressed absolute confidence in the accuracy of his/her perceptions.

What the participants did not realize is that when they viewed the cards that were distributed prior to the projection of the screen image, one-half of their number were shown a sketch of a young woman, while the second half were presented with a sketch of an old woman. What was subsequently projected to the entire group was a composite image of the two sketches. Their earlier brief exposure to the image on the card had successfully conditioned the participants to see only that to which they had been exposed. Thus, a situation was created wherein several individuals could look at the same reality and see very different things.

This dramatic demonstration is used to deepen participant understanding of how perceptions are conditioned by life experiences. It is because of their conditioning that two individuals of different socio-economic background and experience can understand the same reality in very different ways, thereby drawing contradictory conclusions. It is pointed out to the participants that if only a ten second exposure to an image can produce such firm, contradictory perceptions, one can only imagine how entire lives lived in very different circumstances can lead to a conditioning of fundamental attitudes and perspectives. The starting point of effective conflict resolution is the recognition that both parties to a conflict are equally sincere in the claims or grievances they advance; while they may both be looking at the same reality, because of their different conditioning they will see that reality in very different ways.

The “old woman-young woman” demonstration is also a helpful prod toward a constructive humility: it is useful to be reminded of the extent to which our own perceptions and beliefs are conditioned. In effect, both parties to a conflict can be wrong; both can be right. It all depends on one’s perspective. (In their subsequent reflections on their workshop experience, many participants cited “*The Woman*” exercise as one that had found particularly revealing.)

SIMSOC – Simulated Society

The third day of the workshop was taken up with an all-day simulation. SIMSOC (short for ‘simulated society’) is a complex simulation designed by William Gamson to provide insight into the dynamics of social and political conflict. In brief, SIMSOC consists of a single society comprised of four regions—Red, Green, Blue and Yellow—with a very unequal distribution of resources. Participants spend an entire day coping with the challenge of personal survival while building a viable society. They must do so under conditions that closely parallel those of the real world. These conditions include extreme inequality between individuals and groups, a lack of sufficient subsistence for some individuals, major communication barriers between regions, a lack of shared experience and expectations, and a diversity of personal goals.

The members of SIMSOC must subsist; they must secure employment; and they must decide how to allocate whatever resources they possess—whether to invest in industry, or in public welfare programs, or in the creation of police forces. Rioting is also an option. All of the decisions participants make, individually and collectively, determine whether the national indicators rise or fall; and this in turn determines whether the income available to the society’s basic institutions increases or declines. If any of the national

indicators falls below zero, the society collapses. The success or failure of SIMSOC turns on the ability of its members to resolve conflicts arising from resource scarcity and the unequal distribution of both power and wealth—and to develop a broad national vision that transcends their regional boundaries and identities. However, this is not easy: there is a tendency for the members of SIMSOC, as in the real world, to think and act on the basis of their parochial (regional) interests, and (usually without substantive foundation) to mistrust the intentions of persons from other regions. The fact that the cleavage between the society's 'haves' and 'have-nots' largely corresponds to regional boundaries (the poor Reds versus the rich Greens) only compounds the mistrust and aggravates societal tensions. What matters in SIMSOC is not one's real-life ethnicity or regional origins (in assigning participants to the four regions, care is taken to ensure that all regions are ethnically, politically and socially diverse), but whether one is a 'Green' or a 'Red'. Within SIMSOC, as within the DRC, divisions and conflict are a reflection of the uneven distribution of societal resources, and are the direct consequence of poor inter-group communication and the absence of an inclusive process by which national decisions are made.

The SIMSOC produced by the Congolese participants was actually reasonably successful, surviving over the course of three game sessions. (It is not unusual for SIMSOC's to collapse after two or three game sessions.) Yet, severe strains within the Congolese SIMSOC led to a sharp decline in the national indicators measuring social cohesion and standard of living. As is customary, the impoverished Red region, which confronted the total absence of food, money, and even travel coupons enabling its members to venture outside their region, became the most cohesive of all the regions – notwithstanding the presence within the Region of personalities that were viewed as having antagonistic relationships within the real world. Having only their human resources to fall back on, the members of the Red region determined that they would either all live together or die together; as one member declared, “one for all, and all for one.”

By contrast, the better endowed Green and Yellow regions were focused initially on the management and protection of their wealth, and on the creation of more wealth (through the industries located within their regions). At one point, the Green region opted to invest resources in the creation of a police force to protect itself against a perceived (but wholly imaginary) threat from the Reds. And, while members of both Green and Yellow were concerned about the fate of the impoverished Reds – recognizing that high unemployment or death rates in the Red region would impact negatively on the social and economic health of the wider society – they did not fully appreciate the dire situation the Red region confronted. Consequently, the Reds reacted very negatively to what they perceived to be the insensitivity and patronizing arrogance of the Greens and the Yellows; conversely, the Greens and Yellows saw the Reds as lacking any sense of gratitude for what were intended as generous acts of benevolent charity. This disconnect, together with other misunderstandings that arose in the course of various transactions, led to a sharp deterioration in trust and a sense of national cohesiveness.

As is typical, the Congolese participants became emotionally invested in ‘their’ society. As a result of the intensity of their experience, the 2 ½ hour “post-mortem” that followed the playing of SIMSOC yielded powerful insights and important lessons on:

- the role that proximity and communication play in developing (or destroying) trust;
- the fact that messages are not always received the way they are intended, either because of differences in perception and experience, or because of the message sender’s lack of clarity;
- the danger of acting on the basis of untested assumptions;
- the impact of the uneven distribution of resources on inter-group perceptions and conflict;
- the tendency of regions to ‘balkanize’, focusing on their own internal needs and losing sight of their linkages with, and dependence upon, the broader society;
- the need to put oneself into the shoes of the other;
- the importance of inclusive decision-making processes in building trust and resolving conflict
- the road to Hell being paved with good intentions.

As a result of their common experience in SIMSOC -- in which people found themselves often allied with former real-world antagonists in confronting issues of inequality, communications, trust, and power -- the Congolese participants were able to acquire new insight and understanding of the challenges facing their own real world societal reconstruction. And, as their own reflections on “lessons learned” from the SIMSOC experience demonstrated, they were now able to approach these challenges with far greater objectivity and less defensiveness, and with much greater sensitivity to the perspectives and feelings of persons they had previously seen as untrustworthy adversaries. The day following the playing of SIMSOC participants were invited to write on paper two or three of the most important lessons with which they had emerged from the simulation. While the full list of the participant-generated “lessons learned” is presented at Appendix VII, the following comments offered by participants during the verbal feedback session are illustrative:

- Prejudices are obstacles to dialogue.
- A lack of empathy makes dialogue impossible.
- When we work together, we achieve more than when we work alone.

- The development of one, single region does not benefit the whole country when the other regions are poor; because of this, it is better to promote development in the entire country.
- When in charge of a group, it is important to be patient and tolerant.
- We all depend on each other. If someone's wealth does account for another person's misery, the stability of the whole community is in jeopardy.
- To give assistance without considering a recipient's dignity may cause social instability.
- Identification of ways to approach people in order to avoid offending the partner.
- The importance of mutual trust in order to facilitate a cooperative spirit.
- The need to know how to manage diverse interests in a society to preserve a certain harmony, social peace, and even to better organize solidarity.
- When in the same country, it is better to know the economic, social and cultural realities of other regions, to set up a positive cooperation and reduce reciprocal mistrust. In a single country, we should be united. It is like parts of a body; when one is sick, the whole body is troubled. So solidarity is necessary.

Application of Tools to the Analysis of DRC Challenges

On the workshop's fourth day, attention shifted from theory to practice – with the participants being asked (1) to identify the principal obstacles that they believed lay in the way of a more cohesive Congolese state and society, and (2) to diagnose these obstacles or problems and begin the search for alternative solutions to these real-world concerns.

The initial step in the process was a brainstorming exercise, in which the participants were asked to identify every conceivable obstacle to the building of greater societal and state cohesion. The product of this brainstorming effort is provided in Appendix VIII. Next, the participants were asked to vote for two items on this list, in order to determine the obstacles that the largest number of participants felt to be the most important (see Appendix IX). In the end, four broad subjects were selected as areas of priority concern:

- **The Army and Security Services.** Specific problems that needed to be addressed, according to the participants were:
 - the oppressive, colonial nature of the army
 - the tendency of the security services to simply protect an elite
 - the need for integration
 - the need to address bad financial management
 - the persistence of multiple tribal armies

- the proliferation of small arms
- Independence of the Magistracy and the Problem of Impunity, with particular reference to the failure to respect juridical texts and human rights.
- Education, including among other matters, the question of financing, the impact of poverty, and the link between training and employment.
- Advancing the Transition, with particular reference to the electoral process and the need to promulgate a code of conduct for political leaders, and to respect the electoral calendar and outcome. Also of concern is the place of the DRC in the world and the region, and the need to insure the DRC's true territorial integrity, nationality and solidarity.

The participants were presented with the *Four Quadrant Analytic Tool* for problem-solving -- identifying the problem, examining its causes (diagnosis), considering alternate solutions, and deciding on the best course of action – and they then divided into four working-groups, to apply the tool to an examination of the four key obstacles the participants had identified as lying in the way of building a cohesive Congolese state and society. Time did not permit a complete analysis of the problems/obstacles that had been identified; rather, the exercise was designed simply to familiarize the participants with the application of the Four Quadrant Tool, so that they would understand its utility. The work-product of the four groups is presented at Appendix X.

More on Communication: Styles of Listening

Because of their SIMSOC experience, and the communication problems that were very much in evidence throughout the game, participants were invited to attend an optional session on “active listening” prior to the commencement of the workshop’s final day. Approximately a third of the participants turned up for this session, which featured Trainer Lempereur modeling alternative listening styles for the participants, and then facilitating a discussion of such keys to active listening as:

- Being courteous/respectful
- Looking at the other
- Being clear in terms of objectives
- Choosing the right moment for the other to speak and for me to listen
- Demonstrating one’s interest in what the other side is saying
- Being open to the other
- Translating it in body language
- Letting the other speak
- Getting the dialogue going
- Asking questions
- Paraphrasing
- Sincerity

Concluding Day: Identification of Next Steps and Concrete Actions

On the workshop's concluding day, the participants were invited to review their original listing of expectations, to reflect on what they took away from the workshop experience, and to brainstorm possible next steps they wished to take to build on what had been accomplished over their five days of working together, and then to identify concrete actions they intended to pursue. Appendix XI presents the full list of "next steps" developed by the participants. Here we wish to highlight some of the more notable and often moving – even dramatic – observations made by the participants in what was an exceptionally rich set of reflections on the workshop impact.

Transformational Impact – On Individuals and On Relationships

In their reflections on the next steps they wished to take, participants made several references to the transformational impact of the workshop experience – both on individuals and on the relationships among the participants. Illustrative were these comments:

“On the first day, only people who knew each other said hello to each other. Today, everyone said hello to everyone else. This shows relationships are building. And we are not even done yet. We shared an experience. We must meet more often, to continue thinking fruitfully.”

“We became new people in this room. I think it is a good idea to do seminars for specific groups. As for myself coming out of this, as a journalist, I would like to do a show, to which I'd invite all the participants as well as anyone else, to explain to the populations what cohesion really is, in Lingala and in French.”

“Gabriel is not my enemy. [applause] When I have an idea, or he does, we can be in disagreement. But when I started working with him in the Yellow region, I realized he was a dynamic personality. He did not even mind to go and negotiate with Ruberwa. I think he is extremely efficient. So in the past [in Katanga and Kasai] there have been a lot of problems. People had ambitions. There was lack of understanding. And now I think instead of going through others, I can go directly to Gabriel. And that is how we will achieve our objectives. I think people in the provinces will want to know about this. They won't believe it. So let's put an end to conflict and misunderstanding.”

“We are going to come out of this as new men. And if one or the other of us are attacked we will all feel attacked. I heard about Kasai. I lived in that period. . . . If we entered here as adversaries, we must come out as brothers.”

Extending Nganda I's Impact

A second major theme sounded in the participant reflections was their desire to disseminate the lessons they had learned, and the relationships they had established, as widely as possible – and as quickly as possible:

[Referring to the instability on the Rwandan/Congolese border], “We have to ask ourselves similar questions that we have asked during this week within the context of the border conflict. We have to bring forth the richness of this dynamic to other areas of the country, to encourage and facilitate cohesion.”

“Today we have a Congolese state. But we do not have a nation-state. . . . I think that the participants of this workshop that you have chosen can put forth their own efforts to address the problems in the country.”

“We need to spread this training to as many people as possible. I would like to ask the participants to go on television from time to time, and spread the message within and outside their domains. I don't want this to be superficial. We should look at problems and contact those concerned and keep track of our impact and share with the group.”

“We need to reframe the debate. Maybe it's corruption, maybe other things, but there are many issues facing the country. We've talked a lot about many things over the past day, and by doing that I think we've proved the pessimists wrong. Many things lead you to be fatalistic, saying “the Congo is like this, it cannot ever change” but this shows that it can, and be more cohesive. Secondly, it shows that we can focus on the future. When we go out, we shouldn't have any shame about what went on here, we should go out and share it with our families, with our groups, with our parties. You can really change things. If people go out there and say negative things, that'll kill it.”

“There are all of the issues that divide the society, e.g., the electoral law. This group here should become a nucleus to help everyone to discuss this issue dispassionately.”

“This kind of process, in provinces, with local decision-makers, would be to their advantage. It would be wonderful to get this dynamic established in the provinces. Look at North Kivu at this moment: we realize that in the case of North Kivu, there is a communication deficit at base of this particular problem. . . . This dynamism must be infiltrated into other spaces of decision-making.”

“The big advantage I can see from this kind of forum is that there is more cohesion than antagonism. In parliament it is other way around. We have to multiply these experiences throughout the provinces – and bring together the antagonists – in workshops, for three or four days, with these kinds of techniques,

to make these people meet. This might be the kind of forum to bring together people who have never met, even to shake hands. Maybe we should use this moment to take advantage. I don't think it should be organized by nationals, the Congolese. We have our problems: others ask what is his agenda? Where is he coming from?"

"It would be important to train trainers straight away so as to multiply efficiently, and to do a planning for the whole of the country. So that large numbers of people can be involved. We need to train the trainers – to inculcate this in their various environments."

"There are many problems that undermine our relationships and that we haven't talked about. If we could share the problems that we actually live, it would be good if these problems were felt by the whole nation in the same way. So we have to organize opportunities for groups of women, youth, others, to develop a common vision. And the media need to contribute to this."

But this enthusiastic embrace of training as a vehicle for strengthening the cohesion of the Congolese people was tempered by a recognition of the enormity of the task ahead. Thus, one participant observed that while the workshop had provided important techniques for resolving problems, it did not mean that these techniques had been fully internalized:

"Have we integrated all of this, or are we just playing games? As an individual, these techniques are helpful. But how do we disseminate all of this so it becomes part of our society?"

In a similar vein, another participant urged patience. Solutions to the Congo's problems would not be found in an instant:

"We should avoid going into too much in depth today. Let us just see what the problems are and how to solve them. If today there is a problem between Gabriel and Jean-Claude, or between Gabriel and Vincent de Paul, let us proceed patiently, analyze the problem, and begin to find a solution."

Other participants offered these perceptive – and practical -- observations:

"We're only at the beginning, and with time we will appreciate this process. It is creative. The weakness of this process is also its strength: we cannot make decisions here. But where there are decisions to be made, decisions with high stakes, we need to consider how we can influence the process. When there are no stakes involved, it is easier to overcome the antagonisms. It is difficult now to ask our compatriots in North Kivu to speak without passion, because they are directly involved in conflict."

There is no ambition about decision-making in this group, but where there are stakes involved we can intervene positively, with tools we have acquired here. Very soon we will be concerned with the electoral campaign. And probably during the campaign we will be threatened by conflicts that will oblige us to separate. It will be very important to have similar training at the beginning of the election campaign, so that means can be identified to better manage the tensions – because there will be stakes involved in the election. We should come out of here with everyone’s address and phone number. And we should start keeping in touch -- particularly with people with whom we would not normally have contact. Not the easiest ones, but the people who might be more difficult.”

“. . .a process like this one can create attitudes that will lead to peace. But I agree with the advice that we should be careful at the beginning, we can’t get caught up in all of the local conflicts. . . .Can we settle everything with this kind of process? If not, let’s use it to define problems we have. There is a need to exchange our experiences. Each and every one of us is in charge of institutions and offices – at least 10,000 people listen to each of us. We must exchange by little steps – thanks to the tools we have now acquired.”

As is spelled out in the listing of possible next steps in Appendix XI, the participants began to see themselves, individually and collectively, as agents of change. They began to think of themselves, in the words of one participant, as “a nucleus” of an emergent new national vision of how Congolese of divergent interests and perspectives could develop the means of working collaboratively. They saw themselves as constituting a “network,” or “think tank,” that would meet regularly to consider ways of influencing the public discourse, or to play a role in mitigating and managing conflicts as they erupted. It was suggested that, even now, between training sessions, working groups or task forces might be formed to work on such problems as the violence in the Kivus or in Katanga. One particularly ambitious suggestion – reflective of their sense of new possibilities – was the establishment of a Congolese “Management Center” that could have regional impact. At the heart of all of these suggestions was a new paradigm which both affirmed the diversity of the DRC as a positive characteristic, and framed the central task of nation-building as the constructive management of this diversity.

The participants also stressed the need for each individual to take on personal responsibilities for spreading the new vision. They each needed to become examples for others and, in particular, to demonstrate that one did not need to demonize one’s adversary, and that collaborative solutions were possible even with people with whom there were disagreements. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of disseminating what they had learned in the workshop to their own groups and institutions.

Finally, the participants insisted that they needed to continue to train together, and to work together – and to begin to apply the tools and techniques they had acquired in the workshop to real-world Congolese problems and conflicts.

Participant Workshop Evaluations

At the workshop's conclusions, participants were asked to complete a written evaluation of the workshop. The evaluation instrument called both for quantitative measures of participation satisfaction – with each workshop element – and also invited subjective, open-ended reflections. Both sets of data are presented in their entirety as Appendices XII and XIII.

It is no exaggeration to suggest that the training team has never witnessed as uniform and enthusiastic a response as that received from the Congolese participants. It is evident that the workshop was seen by all as a wholly unique happening – unlike anything they had previously experienced. What comes through in their open-ended responses is their sense of new hope and new possibilities for their country. Illustrative of this reaction were these comments:

“It is formidable to see that even those which one believes to be the worst people (according to oneself) can change through such exercises. It is thus possible by spreading this type of training to convert negative forces into positive forces.”

“This retreat . . . offered an occasion to believe that together we can succeed in overcoming our differences.”

“This seminar and training really enriched my knowledge and especially convinced me that the problems can be managed only through dialogue. Dialogue makes it possible to better include/understand the intentions of the other and to lower the prejudices which constitute a major obstacle to national cohesion. Without cohesion there will never be peace.”

“This retreat was positive because it allowed Congolese, little accustomed to reveal themselves, to share and live together a concrete experience apart from their normal practice, their sensitivity and their clan. However, I would hope that we can renew and deepen this experience so it becomes a habit in which we respect the others' differences, diversities, without making a value judgment, permitting only common interests for the general interest of the nation-fatherland.

Participants often used the language of “personal transformation” to try to capture the workshop impact – and they highlighted the building of cohesion among divergent personalities as one of the most significant results of their training experience. When they were invited to make recommendations on appropriate next steps, they came through with a multitude of concrete actions that would build upon the success of the first workshop. They were of one view in urging that the training program be extended as widely as possible – particularly to political leaders, and to areas of the greatest political volatility.

Training Team Reflections and Conclusions

At the workshop's conclusion, Country Team Leader Michel Kassa offered his sense of the impact of the training experience through which the 36 participating leaders had just passed:

“...the first ever “Leadership Training Retreat” of its kind in the DRC has yielded personal transformations and collective commitments - and broken political taboos - the extent and scope of which is still largely unknown one week after its closure. Much of the outcome of this wealth of exchanges will only be known to the protagonists of post-retreat meetings and correspondences. The list of phone and email contacts, together with the set of collective pictures already disseminated among each and every participant has already unfolded a ‘sixth day’ of the workshop in the form of bilateral exchanges which would have never taken place before the workshop.”

Institutional transformation – the ultimate objective of the leadership training initiative that has been launched in the DRC – is a long-term process, the success of which will only be observable many years down the road. But institutional transformation depends, fundamentally, upon the transformation of individual mind-sets and the transformation of relationships among key leaders. And these changes are more easily observed and tracked, even in the short and middle-term.

Certainly the most visible and dramatic impact of the five-day workshop experience occurred at the level of the individual participants. This is evident both in their oral and written commentaries: they came away from their experience seeing themselves, and their world, quite differently than they did prior to the workshop. They all attested to a new sense of empowerment, or ability to effect change – through the tools they were given, and the insights they had achieved. And many spoke of a much greater sense of optimism about the future of the DRC, believing – for the first time, it seemed – that it was indeed possible to develop the means to build a cohesive state and to manage the Congo's remarkable diversity in ways that would advance the national interest.

Framing the Initiative: *Attracting without repulsing*

There are two challenges in undertaking this kind of training initiative: the development of effective, high-impact training tools and modalities, and the recruitment of strategically identified “key leaders.” It is often the second of these challenges that proves the most challenging. Addressing that point is Country Team Leader Michel Kassa's observations about the difficulties faced in persuading those we wanted to participate – whose names had emerged in the course of consultations with a broad range of Congolese figures and independent analysts – to turn up for the workshop:

“Trying to convince personalities to attend a five-day workshop focusing on communication processes rather than on substantive issues, yet containing in its very title such politically sensitive notions as “DRC State,” and “leadership,” was in hindsight one of the most challenging steps in this whole undertaking. A compounding factor was the imperious necessity not to share the expected guest list – the content of which could have mutually scared away a number of personalities -- while hinting to a few invitees the names of a few top leaders expected to be in attendance -- in a bid to set the stage at a proper – appropriately prestigious – level.

Hence the tone of the invitation letter [see Appendix II], the solemnity of which probably gave weight and substance to a venue which was so different from the type of seminars to which Congolese elites are accustomed. As one invited personality (who declined to attend, having business to do outside the country) put it “how can these people invite personalities to a training seminar? Can’t they give us the money straight away?” Adding gravitas to the invitation, the letter’s introduction invited readers to reflect on the DRC’s war, and highlighted the role played by simple “citoyens de base” in attempting to restore state authority even in the most tragic moments of the country’s history – precisely because it was the country’s lowest point.

A small number of personalities warranted individual briefings prior to the workshop, in order to secure their own buy-in, or to brush away part of their fears, or even to instill some appetite and self-interest in the whole undertaking”

Reconciling Politically Sensitive Schedule Conflicts

A major and continuing constraint in mounting this program is that of reconciling the conflicting schedules between the international training team and DRC’s course of events. In the case of Workshop 1, the early set week of 16-21 January happened to conflict with two public holidays (16 January commemorating the assassination of Laurent-Désiré Kabila and 17 January, that of Patrice-Emery Lumumba). To make matters worse, an extraordinary session of the parliament was unexpectedly convened the same week, in an effort to finalize the long-delayed electoral law. Thanks to excellent ties with the President of the National Assembly, a compromise was found: the workshop hours were reduced, so as to permit participants who were also parliamentarians to attend both activities. In both cases, it was of utmost importance not to let the Leadership Initiative be seen as competing for precedence over such key elements of the country’s past and immediate history.

Breaking the Mold

Prior to the formal workshop opening, a major issue had to be addressed: minimizing to security apparatus supposedly required for a participating Vice-President of the Transitional government. At some early stages of the discussion, there were up to six security officers in the conference room. Moving them outside the room for the arrival of

guests other than the Vice-President was clearly imperative. Compounding factors in discussions with these security personnel was the absence of pre-defined seating and the exclusive use of first names in lieu of formal personal identification badges and seats of honor. It was only after protracted negotiations that the security officers eventually departed and spread around, outside the conference room. The other side of the bargain was the training team's agreement to the presence of an *aide-de-camp* to the Vice-President in the room, at the back. This will probably need to be repeated for the third workshop with military leaders. (It should be noted that when the Vice-President arrived, he voiced none of the status and security-related reservations of his security detail, and enthusiastically welcomed the workshop's use of first names.)

Setting the Tone

Following welcoming remarks by Country Team Leader Kassa and a Project Introduction by Director Wolpe, Father Martin Ekwa -- who has agreed to participate as a consultant to the management team -- offered a few words of inspiration. A Jesuit, Father Ekwa -- or 'Martin' as he was called during the workshop -- is respected by all Congolese for his wisdom and his impartiality. His brief words of introduction, quoted at the beginning of this report, went a long way toward providing a sense of purpose and inspiration for the participants. His metaphoric allusion to the love of a mother -- one that embraces their children irrespective of their various statuses and fortunes - was a marvelous way to describe the badly needed rebirth of an impartial and inclusive Congolese state. Father Ekwa's identification with the leadership training partnership is also an important means of affirming a sense of Congolese ownership in the initiative.

Remarkable Encounters

One of the most notable aspects of Nganda I was the inclusion among the workshop participants of a number of previously antagonistic figures who had played, or are still playing, important roles in local (often violent) conflicts. In some instances, these antagonists had never previously met or found any opportunity for civil discourse. Yet, as the workshop proceeded, the barriers quickly came down and former belligerents even found themselves allied and sharing a common perspective.

Two instances of the reconciliation dimension of the workshop impact merit particular comment: that involving key North Kivuan personalities; and that involving figures identified with the volatile conflicts and history of Katanga and Kasai.

The eruption of violence in North Kivu forced one of the participants, Eugene Serafuli, the RCD Governor of North Kivu, to return home after two days. The next morning when the workshop convened, the PPRD's Leonard Mashaku, a long-time opponent of Serafuli's in the eastern DRC, informed the participants that he had received a call from Eugene the previous evening. Serafuli had asked Mashaku to explain to the participants why he had been forced to depart the workshop. Serafuli had told Mashaku that "on the basis of what he had heard in the workshop, he had decided to bring people together,

without exclusion, to work for a solution.” (And, according to subsequent diplomatic reports, Serafuli did just that.)

The significance of Mashaku’s account was obvious: first, that it was he who was chosen by his longtime rival to represent him at the workshop; second, that Eugene was intending to immediately apply the lessons of his training experience to the real-world situation he was facing in North Kivu.

The second particularly noteworthy workshop encounter was that between Gabriel Kyungu wa Kumanza, the former Governor of Katanga, on the one side, and several long-time bitter antagonists, most notably Jean-Claude Muyambo, who was one of the victims of the 1992 expulsions of Kasaians from Katanga.. The workshop brought these two together for the first time and, by the workshop’s last day, both leaders were publicly affirming their desire to work together in addressing the problems of Katanga and Kasai, and were urging the application of what they had learned in the workshop to a resolution of the conflicts within their area. Indeed, several participants from Katanga and Kasai actually participated in an optional working session in which they attempted to use the tools they had been given to undertake an analysis of the causes of their conflict, and of possible solutions. This exercise was notable for the open-minded efforts all of the participants were making to understand the point of view of “the other.”

But there were other first-time encounters in the Nganda I workshop, including between:

- Moise Nyarugabo, the President of the RCD Parliamentarians and former Governor Gabriel Kyungu wa Kumanza
- Vice-President Azarias Ruberwa and former Governor Kyungu wa Kumanza
- North Kivu Governor Eugene Serufuli and Guillaume Samba Kaputo, Presidential Special Advisor for Security
- Nzanga Mobutu, son of the Mobutu Sese Seko and most of the participants.

Insisting on Continuity

In their post-workshop observations, one of the most frequently sounded themes centered on the workshop’s success in bringing together a remarkably divergent group of Congolese leaders and in forging new relationships that most had believed to be inconceivable. It was their cohesion – achieved over a five-day period – that participants described as one of the most remarkable, and hopeful, aspects of their training experience. All saw this as a harbinger of a new DRC – and of the role the workshop participants could play in helping to build a new national vision for a collaborative approach to decision-making and the management of conflict.

But the participants were no less insistent that they wanted to see their training continued, and to see many more Congolese leaders brought into the process as quickly as possible. The management team assured all the participants that their first follow-on training – a shorter two-day workshop – would be organized in the next several weeks. They were also advised that two more leadership groupings would be assembled in the near-term:

one focused on political party leaders, in an effort to prepare for the coming elections; the second focused on military commanders, in an effort to advance the integration of the national army.

Suggested Modifications of the Original Strategy

Shortly after the workshop, the Canadian Ambassador graciously offered to host a debriefing by Director Wolpe and Team Leader Kassa for members of the diplomatic community. In addition, Wolpe and Kassa subsequently met with two of the highest-ranking participants to consider appropriate next steps. Several noteworthy recommendations emerged from these conversations for some modification of the original strategy:

1. When we turn to the task of province-specific training workshops, it was strongly recommended that separate workshop groupings be convened for North and South Kivu, given the very different political dynamics at work in the two provinces. (This would mean one additional training-group, beyond the five originally contemplated.)
2. Ambassador Bill Swing, head of MONUC, is urging that the scope of the original plan be significantly expanded – and that other training and financial resources be mobilized to permit a more rapid extension of this training program to other leaders and zones of volatility.
3. It has been suggested that immediately following elections, one or two workshops be organized for the top-level members of the new government and for parliamentary leaders – to assist the members of the new government to quickly develop a minimum of cohesion and collaborative capacity, and to better manage the likely fall-out of the election campaign. This of course would require a short-term modification of the long-term training strategy – but may well be worth the effort.
4. Because of immediate concern about the volatility of the Kivus (North and South) and Katanga, the training team has been urged to draw additional key players from these provinces into the next workshop for political party leaders. This will be done.

APPENDIX I

List of Participants

List of Participants, NGANDA I, January 17-21, 2006

Title	First Name	Last Name	Party/Sector	Region	Gen.	Role
Rev.	Jean-Pierre	Badidike	Religious	Kasaï/Province Orientale	M	Head of Procure of Kisangani Archdiocese
Hon.	Paulin	Bapolisi	Academic	Sud Kivu/Idjwi	M	Professor and Member of Parliament
Hon.	Jacqueline	Bisimwa	CODECO	Sud Kivu	F	Opposition Member of Parliament
	Francesca	Bomboko	Private Sector	Equateur	F	Head of BERCI Polling Institute
Gen.	Lazare	Boteti	Military	Province Orientale	M	Former Zairian Army General and dissenter
	Baudouin	Hamuli Kabarhuza	Independent	Sud Kivu	M	Head of DRC Preparatory Committee to the International Conference of the Great Lakes
Hon.	Olivier	Kamitatu	Independent	Bandundu	M	President of the National Assembly
Amb.	André	Kapanga	PPRD	Katanga	M	Diplomatic Advisor to the President, Former Ambassador to U.N.
	Bestine	Kazadi	UDPS	Kasaï Oriental	F	UDPS Senior Official
Min.	Gertrude	Kitembo	RCD	Maniema	F	Minister of Posts and Communications
	Jean-Pierre	Kiwakana	Private Sector		M	Former Head of Chamber of Commerce; FEC Senior Official
Hon.	Gabriel	Kyungu Wakumwanza	UNAFEC	Katanga Nord	M	Former Governor of Katanga in early 1990's
Hon.	Thomas	Luhaka	MLC	Kasaï Oriental Sankuru	M	MLC Executive Secretary
P.M.	Vincent de Paul	Lunda Bululu	Independent	Katanga	M	Former Prime Minister
Prof.	Evariste	Mabi Mulumba	Independent	Kasaï Occidental	M	President of the Cour des Comptes
	Chantal	Malamba	PPRD	Bandundu	F	Leader of Coalition for Female Candidates
Prof.	Léonard	Mashako Mamba	PPRD	Nord Kivu	M	Former Minister of Health early 2000's
Prof.	André	Masiala ma Solo	Religious	Bas Congo	M	Protestant Church Leader
Min.	Antipas	Mbusa Nyamwisi	RCD ML	Nord Kivu	M	Minister of Regional Cooperation
	Nzanga	Mobutu	MPR	Equateur	M	Presidential Candidate
Prof.	Séverin	Mugangu	Academic		M	Director of the Institute for Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes, Bukavu
	Jonas	Mukamba	Private Sector	Kasaï Oriental	M	Former Head of MIBA Diamond Company
	Jean-Joseph	Mukendi	UDPS	Kasaï Oriental	M	First Political and Diplomatic Advisor to President Tshisekedi
	Marie-Ange	Mushobekwa	Media	Sud Kivu	F	Television Journalist and Producer
Prof.	Florimond	Muteba	Academic	Kasaï Oriental	M	Chief of Groupe d'Appui à la Transition
	Jean-Claude	Muyambo	CODECO	Katanga Sud	M	Attorney General of Katanga Province; former head of Solidarité Katangaise
Pastor	Agrey	Ngalasi	Religious	Bandundu	M	Head of Église du Reveil
	Freddy	Nsimba	Artist		M	Artist
	Alphonse	Ntumba Luaba	PPRD	Kasaï Occidental	M	Secretary General of the Government

Hon.	Moïse	Nyarugabo	RCD	Sud Kivu	M	President of RCD Parliamentarians
Hon.	Thomas	Otshudi	FONUS	Katangese Kasaiian	M	National Secretary of FONUS
V.P.	Azarias	Ruberwa Manywa	RCD	Sud Kivu	M	Vice-President of the Republic
Prof.	Guillaume	Samba Kaputo	PPRD	Katanga Nord	M	Special Presidential Advisor for Security
	Eugène	Serufuli	RCD	Nord Kivu	M	Governor of Nord Kivu
Hon.	Pétronille	Vaweka	Independent	Province Orientale/Ituri	F	Ituri District Commissioner; head of Ituri administration during 2003 Crisis
	Herold	Wa Issa Sadiki	MLC	Equateur	M	MLC Senior Official