



RIFT VALLEY INSTITUTE | USALAMA PROJECT
UNDERSTANDING CONGOLESE ARMED GROUPS

FNI AND FRPI

LOCAL RESISTANCE AND
REGIONAL ALLIANCES
IN NORTH-EASTERN CONGO

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HENNING TAMM



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THE USALAMA PROJECT

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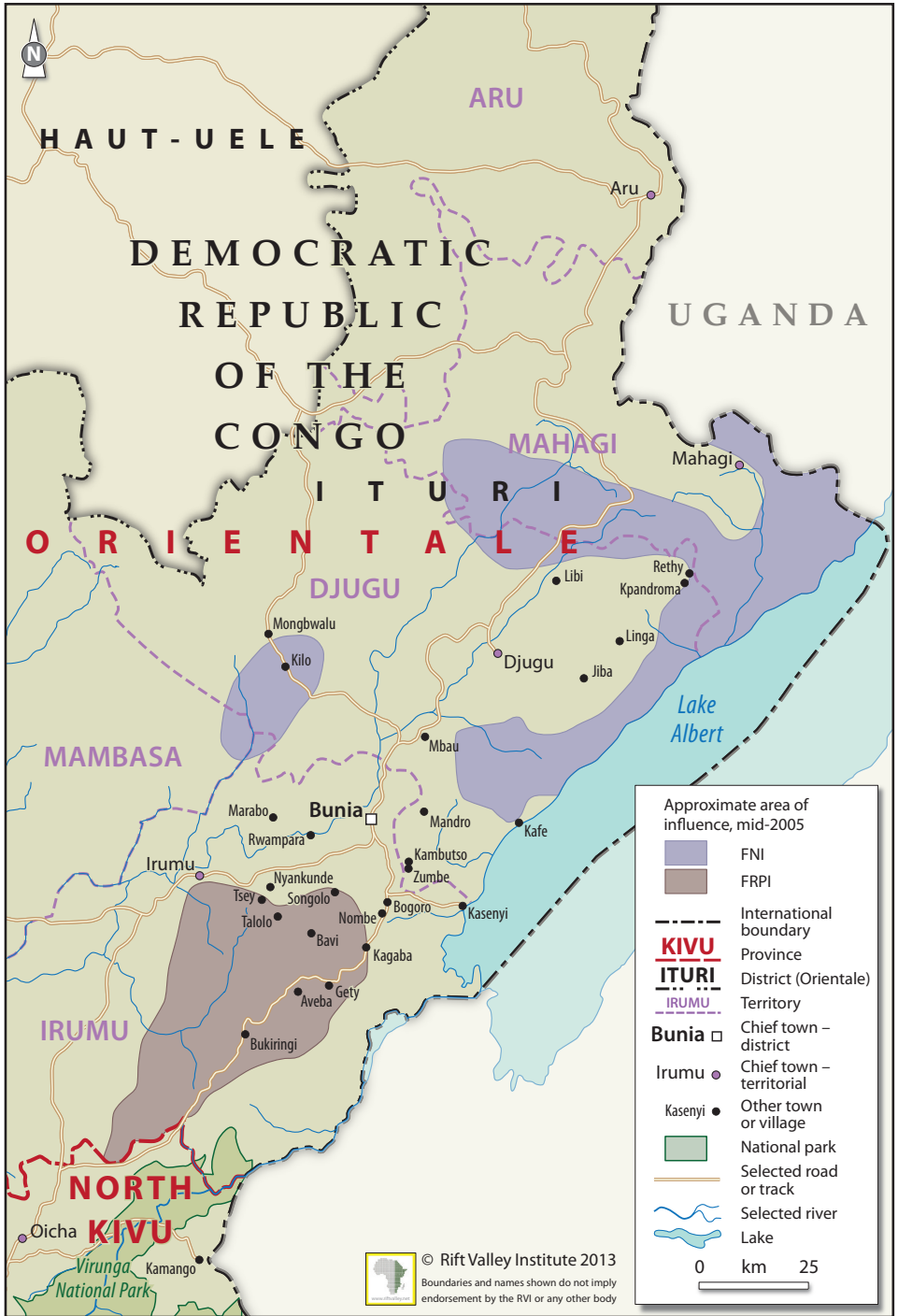
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Map 1. The eastern DRC, showing area of detailed map on following page



Map 2. Ituri, showing areas influenced by the FNI and FRPI

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North Kivu: The Background to Conflict in North Kivu Province of Eastern Congo

PARECO: Land, Local Strongmen, and the Roots of Militia Politics in North Kivu

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'Strongman of the Eastern DRC: A Profile of General Bosco Ntaganda'

'The Perils of Peacekeeping without Politics: MONUC and MONUSCO in the DRC'

Preface: The Usalama Project

The Rift Valley Institute's Usalama Project ('peace' or 'security' in Swahili) is a response to on-going violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The protracted suffering of the inhabitants of this region in the past two decades has resulted in the expenditure of billions of dollars on conflict resolution. Yet the Congolese armed groups at the heart of the conflict are still poorly understood by the international organisations that operate in the DRC—and even by the Kinshasa government itself. The Usalama Project examines the roots of violence, with the aim of providing a better understanding of all armed groups, including the national army, the *Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo* (FARDC, Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo).

The Usalama research programme is guided by a series of questions. What is the history of these armed groups? Who supports and controls them? What are the relations of particular groups to the state, to neighbouring states, to business interests and to the Congolese armed forces? Why have some groups been so difficult to demobilize, while others have disappeared? And are there patterns to be discerned in the ways that groups proliferate, negotiate with the state, and then vanish again?

The project takes a primarily qualitative approach. It analyses historical sources and the small amount of quantitative data available, and traces the origins of armed groups through interviews with politicians, businessmen, representatives of civil society, and members of armed groups. The Project involves extended fieldwork by both international and Congolese researchers. The outcomes include reports on specific armed groups and wider geographical areas of conflict, and a series of seminars and workshops in the DRC.

Many of the interviews for this report were conducted on condition of anonymity. Where confidentiality was requested, identifying information in the report is limited to a number with a location and a date, e.g. Usalama Project Interviewee #105, Goma, 28 August 2012. In the course of the research, accounts of significant and potentially disputed events were confirmed by multiple sources with first-hand knowledge of the events under discussion.

Summary and policy considerations

The Ituri district of the north-eastern Orientale Province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) gained international notoriety due to inter-ethnic clashes between the Hema and Lendu communities that began in 1999 and quickly developed into one of the deadliest conflicts within the larger Second Congo War (1998–2003). In 2003, the UN Security Council authorized a multinational intervention force to contain the bloodshed. It took another four years of significant international involvement, however, before Ituri began to witness a sharp decline in violence and displacement. Since then, the situation in the district has remained fragile. In 2012, it first seemed as though Ituri could once again be embroiled in a broader regional conflict—linked to the M23 rebellion in North Kivu—but the latter’s impact has so far remained limited.

The greatest challenges to the stabilization of the Congo are commonly held to be threefold: the collapse of the state, the abundance of resources easily taxed or pillaged by militias, and a prevalent culture of using armed mobilization to promote political ends. From 1999 to 2007, all three of these characteristics could be found in Ituri. In recent years, however, local politics have become significantly less militarized. While the district is still restive, its trajectory can be seen as a relative success compared to developments in North and South Kivu. This decrease in violence has resulted mainly from a combination of intra-regional dynamics and robust military operations jointly conducted by UN peacekeepers and the Congolese army. This recipe cannot be reproduced elsewhere in identical form but it can serve as a helpful guide to dealing with conflict in other parts of the DRC.

This report, like its predecessor on the *Union des patriotes congolais* (UPC, Union of Congolese Patriots), examines the precipitous decline in armed violence in Ituri but shifts the perspective from Hema- to

Lendu-dominated armed groups.¹ Specifically, it focuses on the *Front des nationalistes intégrationnistes* (FNI, Front of Integrationist Nationalists) and the *Force de résistance patriotique en Ituri* (FRPI, Ituri Patriotic Resistance Force), both of which emerged out of several smaller Lendu militias and were formally established in late 2002. While the FNI largely transformed itself into a political party in 2005, the FRPI continues to resist army integration to this day.

Both groups were born out of local feuding over land, and proxy wars between Kinshasa, Kampala, and Kigali. The involvement of Rwanda and Uganda in Ituri dwindled after 2005, which made it easier for the Congolese government and its foreign partners to arrest or integrate armed group commanders and dismantle the groups. However, the government has never thoroughly addressed the local roots of the fighting, making a rekindling of the conflict a constant possibility, especially as regional tensions mount in the wake of the M23 rebellion.

Lendu militias have been less centralized and cohesive than their Hema counterparts, which has also made it more difficult to strike durable peace deals with them. Two broad groups can be distinguished: those in northern Ituri, who grew out of the land conflicts in 1999 and were widely dispersed across several *collectivités* separated by Hema-controlled areas; and those who subsequently emerged out of the southern Lendu community living in the geographically homogenous *collectivité* of Walendu Bindi. When fighting escalated during a regional proxy war in 2002, the northern groups evolved into the FNI, the southern groups into the FRPI. For a short period lasting from mid-2002 to mid-2003, both received support not only from the Congolese but also from the Ugandan army, which sought to balance against the Rwandan-backed UPC.

Together with the Ugandan army, the FNI and FRPI forced the UPC out of Ituri's capital, Bunia, in March 2003. After Uganda's withdrawal from the district two months later, however, the UPC recaptured the city

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 1 Henning Tamm, *UPC in Ituri: The External Militarization of Local Politics in North-eastern Congo* (London: Rift Valley Institute, 2013).

in a battle that left hundreds of civilians dead. In the subsequent months, the two groups retreated to their respective strongholds in northern and southern Ituri. There, internal conflict and splits soon revealed the gulf between politicians and local militia commanders in the FNI and even more so in the FRPI. The illusion of two well-organized armed groups, created in 2002 with support from the Congolese and Ugandan governments, thus once again gave way to the reality of heavily fragmented, localized militias.

By late 2007, most of their commanders and troops had integrated into the Congolese army. While the FNI's politicians created a political party, the FRPI maintained a small but disruptive force in Walendu Bindi. In May 2010, Cobra Matata, the most notorious of the FRPI commanders, defected from the army and re-joined his former comrades. Since late 2011, he has been benefiting from army defections and new rebel coalitions, all of which have been linked in some way with the M23. In the meantime, Kinshasa has alternated between fighting and negotiating with the FRPI, while doing little to address pervasive tensions surrounding land and local power.

Integrating Cobra's men into the national army, however, would not by itself bring lasting peace to Ituri. As long as the government is unable to tackle the broader issues, long-term stability will remain elusive.

Decentralization

This issue features prominently, not just in the discourse of local politicians but also in recent declarations by armed groups. Implementing the relevant provisions from the 2006 constitution, thereby turning Ituri from a provincial district into a province, could help restore a modicum of trust in the Kinshasa government among Iturians.

Security sector and justice sector reform

The Congolese army continues to be weakened by regular waves of defections, while judicial institutions remain riven by corruption. To avoid a strengthening of Ituri's militias, whose ranks have recently been fed

by army defectors, and to ensure the fair settlement of land disputes, security and justice sector reforms need to be strengthened both nationally and locally.

Land disputes

Beyond guaranteeing due legal process with regard to land conflicts, the Congolese government should put greater efforts into identifying and demarcating land boundaries and ownership, as these questions continue to fuel inter-ethnic as well as intra-ethnic tensions in the district.

Truth and reconciliation commission (TRC)

After the conflict peaked in Ituri, the government made only a half-hearted effort at establishing a local TRC, failing to provide it with sufficient funding. Such an effort needs to be reinvigorated and led by local peace-building organizations, which have already done important work in recent years to rebuild inter-ethnic trust and address the root causes of violence and socio-economic inequality in Ituri.

Natural resource governance

Ituri's natural resource sector remains dominated by informal dynamics from which primarily a few businessmen and officials based in the Congo and Uganda profit—rather than Iturians at large. Both governments could be encouraged to help further formalize existing trade networks between the two countries, especially with regard to gold trading.

1. Introduction

Located in the DRC's north-eastern corner, Ituri is known first and foremost as the scene of one of the most violent conflicts within the larger Second Congo War. In 1999, with the district under Ugandan occupation, land disputes between Hema landowners and Lendu farmers turned into deadly conflicts, leading to the creation of self-defence groups on both sides. Although these two communities only represented an estimated 40 per cent of the roughly 3.5 million people living in Ituri at the time, they were the main protagonists in the fighting that left at least 55,000 people dead and more than 500,000 displaced in its first four years.²

Due to their socio-economically dominant position and their connections to senior Ugandan army officers, the Hema were relatively well organized from the start. Lendu groups, by contrast, remained fragmented and often emerged spontaneously, at least until late 2002. At that point, the Hema-dominated UPC attracted support from Uganda's rival Rwanda, which led Uganda to collaborate with the Congolese government—and together Kampala and Kinshasa supported the formal creation of the Lendu-dominated FNI and FRPI. Nonetheless, decentralization remained a key feature of Lendu militias. Neither the FNI nor the FRPI has ever had full control over the Lendu combatants in their areas of influence, a fact that poses significant challenges not only to presenting a coherent history of Lendu resistance but also to finding durable solutions to the FRPI's continued resistance in southern Ituri.

In the eyes of Lendu community leaders, any history of armed struggle needs to begin with an understanding of the unequal relations between Hema and Lendu that developed under Belgian colonialism.³ When

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2 IRIN, 'In-Depth: Ituri in Eastern DRC', 25 November 2002; Human Rights Watch (HRW), 'Ituri: "Covered in Blood": Ethnically Targeted Violence in Northeastern DR Congo', July 2003, p. 1.

3 Usalama Project interviews with Didi Angaika, Bunia, 9 August 2012, and Michel Kalimi, Bunia, 21 August 2012.

the explorer and journalist Henry Morton Stanley led an expedition to southern Ituri in the late 1880s, he collaborated with the Hema while encountering fierce resistance from the Lendu. Stanley's best-selling books about his journey, in which he described the Hema as racially superior to the Lendu, subsequently had a lasting impact on Belgian colonial policy. Based on a flawed understanding of the complex social relations in Ituri prior to colonization, Hema were favoured over Lendu in the areas of administration, the economy, and education.⁴ A Hema community leader concurred that the deeper sources of conflict in Ituri lay both in this 'economic disequilibrium' and in 'the cultural belief of Hema superiority' institutionalized by the Belgians.⁵

After independence, several bouts of violence broke out between Hema and Lendu. In contrast to the serious fighting that erupted in Djugu territory in northern Ituri in 1999, these earlier episodes were more limited and primarily took place in Irumu territory in southern Ituri. It is important to highlight some of the historical and geographical differences between these two territories, as they shed light on the different nature of armed mobilization between northern Lendu—historically also known as Bale—and southern Lendu—also called Ngiti.

The origins of post-independence violence in Irumu lay largely in disputes over administrative borders. Leaders from the Walendu Bindi *collectivité* argue that three Ngiti villages had been falsely incorporated into the Bahema Sud *chefferie* (chieftaincy), denying them access to Lake Albert.⁶ In Djugu territory, the conflicts that eventually acquired a lethal aspect in 1999 were based on land disputes, exacerbated by the General Property Law of 1973, which abolished, at least officially, customary

4 For an historical overview and discussion of the relevant literature, see Dan Fahey, *Ituri: Gold, Land, and Ethnicity in North-eastern Congo* (London: Rift Valley Institute, 2013).

5 Usalama Project Interviewee #71, Bunia, December 2012. On colonial discourses and policies, see Johan Pottier, 'Representations of Ethnicity in the Search for Peace: Ituri, Democratic Republic of Congo', *African Affairs* 109/434 (2010), pp. 23–50.

6 Dan Fahey, 'This Land is My Land: Land Grabbing in Ituri', in *Land Grabbing in the Great Lakes Region of Africa* (ed. An Ansoms) (forthcoming).

tenure and declared all land to be state property. Some Hema elites took advantage of this law and their privileged access to the state bureaucracy, acquiring land that many Lendu considered to belong to their ancestors.⁷

Geography also played an important role in the fighting. The Ngiti in Irumu are concentrated in the large *collectivité* of Walendu Bindi, whereas the Lendu in Djugu are spread across Walendu Djatsi, Walendu Tatsi, and Walendu Pitsi. All three *collectivités* are interspersed with Hema chieftaincies, thus creating both Hema and Lendu enclaves. Although the Lendu primarily settled in Djugu and Irumu, there is also one Lendu *collectivité* in Mahagi territory: Walendu Watsi, which borders Walendu Pitsi.⁸ The fact that Hema self-defence groups managed to keep Lendu-populated areas in Djugu separated from each other was one of the reasons why Lendu resistance in that territory would remain fragmented and uncoordinated for more than three years.⁹

The broader political context

The Ituri conflict began in the rural areas of Djugu but its trajectory can only be understood in the context of the regional rivalries that took place on the eastern Congolese stage at the end of the 1990s. While Ituri suffered from violence and looting during the First Congo War (1996–7), as Mobutu’s soldiers retreated between December 1996 and March 1997, the district initially remained peaceful when the Uganda People’s Defence Force (UPDF) took Bunia and its airport in August 1998 in support of the

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7 Usalama Project Interviewee #54, Kinshasa, August 2012. On the 1973 law and land conflicts more broadly, see Koen Vlassenroot and Chris Huggins, ‘Land, Migration and Conflict in Eastern DRC,’ in *From the Ground Up: Land Rights, Conflict and Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa* (eds. Chris Huggins and Jenny Clover) (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2005), pp. 115–194.

8 Maps illustrating all these administrative units can be found in Eric Mongo et al., *Conflits fonciers en Ituri: Poids du passé et défis pour l’avenir de la paix* (Bunia and Utrecht: Réseau Haki Na Amani and IKV Pax Christi, 2009).

9 Usalama Project Interviewee #73, Bunia, December 2012.

new *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* (RCD, Congolese Rally for Democracy) rebellion against Laurent Kabila's government.¹⁰

Soon after the beginning of this second war, tensions emerged between Rwandan Vice-President Paul Kagame and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni. Dissatisfied with the extent of control exerted by Rwanda over the RCD, Museveni first supported the creation of another Congolese rebel group, Jean-Pierre Bemba's *Mouvement de libération du Congo* (MLC, Congo's Liberation Movement), and then backed RCD president Ernest Wamba dia Wamba when members close to Rwanda tried to depose him in May 1999. The Ugandan army subsequently ensured the safe passage of Wamba's faction from Goma to Kisangani, where he established the RCD-K/ML (*RCD-Kisangani/Mouvement de libération*, RCD-Kisangani/Liberation Movement).¹¹

In August 1999, the armies of Museveni and Kagame—comrades-in-arms since the days when they both fought Idi Admin—engaged in a fierce battle for the control of Kisangani. Eventually, the UPDF once again evacuated Wamba, who then moved his headquarters to Bunia. When he arrived there, clashes between Hema and Lendu self-defence groups were already well underway. Formerly a left-leaning history professor at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, whom circumstances had catapulted into leading a rebellion, Wamba now faced the challenge of resolving this inter-communal conflict.

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10 Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 'Report of the Mapping Exercise documenting the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed within the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo between March 1993 and June 2003' (June 2010), p. 129; International Court of Justice, 'Case concerning armed activities on the territory of the Congo (Democratic Republic of the Congo v. Uganda)', Judgement of 19 December 2005, para. 110; Usalama Project interview with Daniel Litsha, Bunia, 12 December 2012.

11 Gérard Prunier, *Africa's World War: Congo, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), chapters 6–7.

2. Origins of the FNI and FRPI

The roots of the FNI and FRPI lie both in Lendu self-defence groups, created in towns and villages across Ituri, and in political machinations conceived in Kampala, Kinshasa, and the RCD-K/ML base in Beni. It would therefore be misleading to attribute these origins entirely or even primarily to elite manoeuvring. Indeed, the politicians who launched the FNI and FRPI in late 2002 struggled to control the self-defence groups that had existed since 1999. Despite the close ethnic ties between them and the militia commanders, superimposing political structures onto loosely organized combatants led to tensions and contradictions. This chapter, then, describes the emergence of Lendu militias in Djugu and Irumu territories and explains how regional political developments brought about the creation of the FNI and FRPI.

Lendu resistance in Djugu territory

Violence in Djugu territory began in earnest in April 1999, at the Leyna concession located between Linga and Kpandroma in the Walendu Pitsi *collectivité*. Lendu villagers accused Singa Kodjo, the Hema owner of Leyna, of illegally expanding his concession into surrounding Lendu-owned land. The exact chain of events remains contested, but it appears that Kodjo appealed to local police for assistance, triggering a Lendu attack. Similar events occurred in localities nearby, one involving the murder of a Hema concession owner.¹² At the end of May, Kodjo and other influential Hema paid Captain Anthony Kyakabale, the sector commander of the Ugandan army, to expel Lendu occupying their concessions and to arrest several prominent Lendu leaders.¹³

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12 Dan Fahey, 'Rethinking the Resource Curse: Natural Resources and Polywar in the Ituri District, Democratic Republic of the Congo' (PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2011), chapter 5.

13 UN Security Council, S/2004/573, 'Special Report on the Events in Ituri, Jan 2002–Dec 2003', 16 July 2004, para. 19; Usalama Project Interviewee #58, Bunia, August 2012.

It is unclear who was responsible for turning these minor quarrels into a full-blown war. Lendu elders date the beginning of the war to the weekend of 18–20 June 1999, when they say Hema militias and Ugandan troops attacked the predominantly Lendu villages of Linga and Jiba.¹⁴ It is likely, however, that the fighting in these two villages actually began with Lendu rather than Hema aggression.¹⁵ These clashes coincided with the appointment of Hema politician Adèle Lotsove as governor of Kibali-Ituri Province. She was appointed by Brigadier James Kazini, the Ugandan commander of operations in the DRC. This new province—which recreated an entity that had existed in colonial times—combined the resource-rich districts of Ituri and Haut-Uele. Many Iturians interpreted Kazini’s decision as a clear signal that Uganda favoured the Hema.¹⁶

It was in this context that RCD-K/ML president Wamba dia Wamba arrived in the district capital. In October 1999, he set up a Commission for Security and Peace in Djugu territory. Two months later, convinced that Governor Lotsove had exacerbated the conflict, Wamba replaced her with Ernest Uringi Padolo, an Alur who was considered more neutral. Meanwhile, President Museveni invited representatives from Ituri to Kampala for discussions, and replaced sector commander Kyakabale.¹⁷

The violence, however, continued and Wamba soon found himself embroiled in a leadership conflict, which was fostered, at least in part, by rival factions within the Ugandan government and army. The feud pitted Wamba against the RCD-K/ML’s commissioner-general, Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi, and the latter’s deputy, John Tibasima.¹⁸ Whereas Wamba was a native of western Bas-Congo province, and so considered an outsider

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14 Usalama Project Interviewees #80, #81, and #82, Rethy, December 2012.

15 Dan Fahey, ‘What Caused the War in Ituri? A New Interpretation’ (unpublished manuscript), July 2012, pp. 16–17.

16 HRW, ‘Uganda in Eastern DRC: Fueling Political and Ethnic Strife’, March 2001, pp. 34–35.

17 HRW, ‘Uganda in Eastern DRC’, pp. 35–40.

18 For a detailed account of the events summarized in the following two paragraphs, see Tamm, *UPC in Ituri*, chapter 2.

by Iturians, Mbusa (a Nande from North Kivu) and Tibasima (a local Hema) were able to benefit from the fact that theirs were economically the two most influential ethnic groups in the area under RCD-K/ML control. Crucially, both had stitched together business relations with senior UPDF officers.

In July 2000, Hema commanders within the RCD-K/ML's armed wing, the *Armée populaire congolaise* (APC, Popular Congolese Army), staged a mutiny, partly in protest against what they saw as Wamba's pro-Lendu position. Once again, President Museveni backed Wamba: some of his most trusted advisors went to Bunia and negotiated a deal that led to the mutineers' surrender in return for military training in Uganda. In the wake of this mutiny, however, Mbusa managed to divide UPDF officers on the ground, launching a coup that finally forced Wamba out of Bunia.

The emergence and trajectory of Lendu militias in Djugu's countryside needs to be seen against the background of these developments at Ituri's political centre. Given the largely one-sided support of the UPDF for Hema politicians and militias, Lendu leaders saw themselves as victims, forced into armed resistance.

Lendu representatives from across Djugu refer to the early stages of Lendu militias as *autodéfense populaire* (popular self-defence).¹⁹ In the words of one local leader, there was 'strong resistance, but no strong organization'.²⁰ Using drums, the traditional way of warning nearby villages of imminent danger, Lendu self-defence groups sprung up, village by village, in reaction to Hema militia activity. Whoever led these spontaneous uprisings or proved their strength on the battlefield would automatically become a commander, while the others were simply known as *combattants* or fighters. For virtually every such group in Djugu and Irumu, there is a story of how its fighters, driven by a 'spirit of revenge', began with crude weapons such as machetes or spears, before capturing

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 19 Usalama Project Interviewees #80, #81, #82, #84, and #87, Rethy, Kpandroma, and Kobu, December 2012.

20 Usalama Project Interviewee #81, Rethy, December 2012.

one or more firearms from dead Ugandan soldiers or Hema combatants.²¹

There was an important link between the militias and the leadership conflict within the RCD-K/ML. From late 1999 onwards, Mbusa and Tibasima had both begun recruiting youth for military training. While Tibasima mostly enlisted Hema for the Rwampara camp near Bunia, Mbusa drew especially on Nande and Lendu for the Nyaleke camp close to Beni in North Kivu's *Grand Nord* (the larger northern part of the province). During the power struggle between Wamba and Mbusa in the second half of 2000, many of these recruits left their APC units and returned to their home villages, often assuming leadership roles in local militias.²² One of these returnees was Goda Sukpa, who later became one of the main FNI military commanders in Djugu.²³ Other commanders, like Mathieu Ngudjolo, had been trained in Mobutu's civil guard.

Some Lendu elders also played important roles within these self-defence groups, typically relying on magical beliefs and practices. Like members of Mai-Mai militias in the Kivus, combatants believed that certain powders or lotions would make them invincible. The elders in charge of administering them were known as 'spiritual fathers' or 'pastors'.²⁴

It is difficult to delineate the area controlled by Lendu militias. Apart from Kpandroma and Rethy, which remained in Lendu hands throughout the conflict, most Lendu accounts from Djugu involve stories of repeatedly fleeing from one place to another. The other major town in which many Lendu lived until the UPC captured it in November 2002 was

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21 Usalama Project interviews with Akobi Chrysanthe, 14 August 2012; Ngabu Wele, 23 August 2012; Eric Bahati Ngabu, 31 August 2012; and Augustin Lobo Nyinga, 16 December 2012 (all in Bunia).

22 HRW, 'Uganda in Eastern DRC', pp. 20, 44–45; Usalama Project Interviewee #54, Kinshasa, August 2012.

23 Usalama Project interview with Herman Ndrugboma Kranjedu (local FNI coordinator), Kpandroma, 17 December 2012.

24 Usalama Project interviews with Akobi Chrysanthe, Bunia, 14 August 2012, and Eric Bahati Ngabu, Bunia, 31 August 2012. See also Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History* (London: Zed Books, 2002), p. 3.

Mongbwalu, a key mining centre. From there and other places, some Lendu had gone to Mbau, a remote village on a hill that served both as sanctuary and training ground early on in the conflict.²⁵ One fighter known as ‘Maître Kiza’, who was around 25 years old and soon became the most celebrated Lendu commander in Djugu, began his militia career there and then fought in several places, eventually arriving in Kpandroma. In Mongbwalu, it was Mateso ‘Kung Fu’ Nyinga, a locally famous *orpailleur* (gold washer), who came to be seen as the key Lendu commander.²⁶ Both Kiza and Nyinga would later play crucial roles in the FNI’s military operations in 2003.

In contrast to Hema militias, Lendu groups received little outside support until mid-2002. There were some notable exceptions, however, such as the occasional interventions of individual UPDF officers—most notably Colonel Peter Kerim—to protect Lendu villages, and APC units protecting the town of Mongbwalu to safeguard mining operations.²⁷

Ngiti self-defence in Irumu territory

When the fighting began in Djugu in 1999, Irumu initially remained peaceful. Over time, however, more and more displaced Lendu from Djugu arrived in Walendu Bindi, with Hema militias in pursuit.²⁸ In 2000, Hema combatants from the neighbouring Bahema Sud chieftaincy, as well as APC soldiers, reportedly attacked three villages—Nombe, Soke, and Kagaba—bringing the conflict to Walendu Bindi. Ngiti self-defence

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 25 Usalama Project interview with Augustin Lobo Nyinga, Bunia, 16 December 2012.

26 Usalama Project Interviewees #79, Kpandroma, #80 and #81, Rethy, and #87, Kobu, December 2012.

27 Usalama Project Interviewee #79, Kpandroma, December 2012; interview with Marcélin Ndovya Kambale, Mongbwalu, 19 December 2012.

28 Unless otherwise stated, this section is based on Usalama Project interviews with Didi Angaika, 9–10 August 2012; Akobi Chrysanthe, 14 August 2012; and Nyanza Nyatsimba, 15 August 2012 (all in Bunia).

groups then started to form in villages across the *collectivité*.²⁹ While there was some communication between them, each group remained largely autonomous until late 2002.

As the violence slowly spread across Irumu, Bernard Kakado, a man in his late seventies, started to organize one such self-defence group in the fertile forest area surrounding Tsey, territory of the Ngiti ethnic group. Kakado, who would later be seen as the spiritual father of the FRPI, was managing director of the agricultural enterprise *Coopérative de développement économique du Congo* (CODECO, Cooperative for the Economic Development of the Congo). He was also widely considered to have the gift of prophecy. According to an FRPI commander, Kakado began to warn his Ngiti community of the imminent danger of extermination, referring to the idea of a Hima-Tutsi empire—a rumour spread during the Congo wars, suggesting that the Rwandan and Ugandan leadership wanted to annex eastern Congo through local allies such as the Hema.³⁰

The conflict in Irumu escalated in early January 2001, when the Ugandan army became heavily involved. Together with Hema militias, the UPDF began to attack Walendu Bindi from three sides. Having learned of Kakado's forest militia, the UPDF sector commander organized a meeting in Nyankunde, a town just outside the *collectivité* and predominantly inhabited by the Bira ethnic group. He warned the Ngiti that were present that he would use helicopters to bomb Walendu Bindi unless the forest militia disarmed. In response, the militia attacked Nyankunde that same night, killing several UPDF soldiers and setting in motion a cycle of violence.³¹

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29 Given that many northern Lendu fled to Irumu, these predominantly Ngiti groups sometimes also included Lendu from Djugu.

30 Usalama Project Interviewee #57, Gety, September 2012. Hima here refers to an ethnic group living in southwestern Uganda, in the former kingdom of Ankole. Ugandan President Museveni hails from that region. On the shared historical links between the Hima of Uganda and the Hema of Ituri, see Pottier, 'Representations of Ethnicity', pp. 33-47.

31 On the violence following the attack, see UN Security Council, 'Special Report on the Events in Ituri', para. 22; HRW, 'Uganda in Eastern DRC', pp. 46-47.

These local events coincided with a regional initiative: the creation of the short-lived *Front de libération du Congo* (FLC, Front for the Liberation of Congo). This group represented Uganda's attempt to merge Jean-Pierre Bemba's MLC, the RCD-K/ML, and Roger Lumbala's *RCD-National* (RCD-N). As the most successful Ugandan-backed rebel chief, Bemba—whose troops controlled Equateur Province in the northern DRC—was chosen to lead the FLC and decided to come to Ituri for negotiations in early February. After a meeting in Nyankunde, he invited representatives from all communities to Bunia's football stadium, where Hema and Lendu signed a cease-fire agreement and ceremoniously buried hatchets and machetes.

The agreement was followed by a temporary lull in fighting in Irumu. At the same time, however, communal tensions increased, after Bira helped to arrest several Ngiti suspected of being militia members. When the UPDF tried to arrest Colonel Kandro, a former Congolese military officer who lived in the predominantly Bira village of Talolo, he fled to the Ngiti territory of Tsey. Kandro soon emerged as the military leader of Kakado's forest militia and later became the commander of the village of Songolo. It was Kandro who began to transform the militia along more conventional military lines, also reaching out to other local commanders in Walendu Bindi.³²

Meanwhile, regional shifts in alliances began to have an impact on the *collectivité*. Unhappy with the FLC arrangement that had left him inferior to Bemba, the new RCD-K/ML president Mbusa had used his connections with senior UPDF officers to chase Bemba from Beni in June 2001. Then, he had allied with Thomas Lubanga's Hema-dominated UPC, eventually driving Bemba and his troops out of Bunia as well. Soon after Mbusa appointed Lubanga as RCD-K/ML minister of defence, however, tensions emerged between the two.

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32 Usalama Project Interviewee #57, Gety, September 2012; International Criminal Court (ICC), 'Situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the Case of the Prosecutor v. Germain Katanga and Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui: Second Corrigendum to the Defence Closing Brief', 29 June 2012, para. 557.

In early 2002, Mbusa—who spent most of his time at the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in South Africa and began to develop close relations with the government in Kinshasa—appointed Jean-Pierre Molondo Lompondo, an outsider from Kasai in the south-western DRC, as the new Governor of Ituri and commander of the APC, effectively demoting Lubanga.³³ In April 2002, Lompondo and UPDF Colonel Kerim met Ngiti representatives in Gety, from where the Ugandan army was launching attacks against Ngiti villages in Walendu Bindi.

In the eyes of the UPC, this meeting was evidence that Mbusa—through Lompondo, his man on the ground—was about to turn against the Hema by using the Lendu to control Ituri on behalf of the Congolese government. Shortly afterwards, the tensions in Bunia thus escalated. APC units loyal to Lubanga staged a mutiny. The city was cut into two parts—one controlled by Lubanga, the other by Lompondo. During this stalemate, which lasted until August, the governor met with Colonel Kandro, whose Ngiti militia then began to carry out operations with Lompondo's APC.³⁴ This new alliance initially appeared as the first serious challenge to Uganda's occupation since it took control of the district in August 1998.

The regional backdrop to the creation of the FNI and FRPI

Having felt abandoned for the first three years of fighting in Ituri, Mbusa's shift towards Lendu militias provided them with a glimmer of hope. Their situation further improved in the following months as the UPC turned to Rwanda, thus encouraging an alliance between Kinshasa and Kampala.

During the stalemate in Bunia in mid-2002, the Ugandan government found itself in a difficult position. On 19 April, Mbusa had signed the Sun City Agreement in South Africa on behalf of the RCD-K/ML, opening

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 33 Tamm, *UPC in Ituri*, chapter 2.

34 ICC, 'Katanga testimony, 28 September 2011', p. 28.

the way for a Congolese transitional government.³⁵ In the context of increasing international pressure and hostile relations with Rwanda, Kampala subsequently manoeuvred between mending relations with Kinshasa whilst also ensuring continued control over the areas of north-eastern Congo under its occupation. Indicative of this brinksmanship, the Ugandan government first had Lubanga arrested and transferred to Kinshasa when he came to Kampala for negotiations in June, then it sided with the mutineers loyal to Lubanga and helped chase out Governor Lompondo from Bunia in August.

When the mutineers and the UPDF attacked Lompondo's forces, many Lendu who would later play key roles in the FNI and FRPI—including Mathieu Ngudjolo, as well as RCD-K/ML members Dr Baudouin Adirodu and Floribert Ndjabu—took refuge in the governor's residence.³⁶ Lompondo and others then fled to Songolo, staying with Kandro for some time before moving on to the new RCD-K/ML headquarters in Beni, where Mbusa and the Congolese government began to make plans for regaining control over Ituri 'at all costs'.³⁷ Given the polarized nature of the fighting in the district, they considered Lendu militias as a natural ally in defeating the Hema-dominated UPC.

While the inter-ethnic violence in Ituri reached new heights, the Ngiti militias in Walendu Bindi were shaken by infighting. In mid-September, Kandro was killed by a bodyguard of self-styled Colonel Cobra Matata, who was at the time commander of Olongba (also known as Bavi). The murder led to battles between Cobra and several other commanders. It appears that Kakado, the prophet from Tsey, then used his influence

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35 Gérard Prunier, 'The "Ethnic" Conflict in Ituri District: Overlapping of Local and International in Congo-Kinshasa', in *The Recurring Great Lakes Crisis: Identity, Violence and Power* (eds. Jean-Pierre Chrétien and Richard Banégas) (London: Hurst & Co., 2008), p. 195.

36 ICC, 'Situation en République Démocratique du Congo, Affaire Le Procureur c. Mathieu Ngudjolo: Jugement rendu en application de l'article 74 du Statut', 18 December 2012, para. 411: <http://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/doc/doc1529535.pdf>.

37 ICC, Ndjabu testimony, 30 March 2011, p. 45: <http://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/doc/doc1053615.pdf>.

to appoint Germain Katanga as the new leader of the Walendu Bindi militias.³⁸

Katanga began his military career as a bodyguard for Kasaki Bandru, a 55-year-old *féticheur* (witchdoctor) from Aveba, described by an interviewee as Kakado's 'spiritual son'.³⁹ Indicative of his new role, Katanga led the delegation of Aveba combatants that went to Beni in late November 2002 to coordinate activities between the APC, the Congolese army, and Lendu militias. In Beni, he met Mbusa and his advisor Dr Adirodu, also an Ngiti. At one of the meetings, the latter explained that he was the head of the FRPI delegation—an acronym that Katanga and the other Walendu Bindi delegates had never heard before. Nonetheless, upon their return, they began to use the term FRPI for the Ngiti militias, associating it with military and political support from Kinshasa.⁴⁰

Prior to these discussions with Katanga, Floribert Ndjabu, a public relations officer in the cabinet of the RCD-K/ML commissioner for transport and communication before fleeing to Beni, had initially been chosen as coordinator between the different allies. Shortly after his appointment, however, Dr Adirodu arrived from Kinshasa, challenging Ndjabu's role and claiming—for the first time—that he had created the FRPI in Kinshasa and that the Kabila government had sent him to coordinate activities between the FRPI, the RCD-K/ML, and the *État-major opérationnel intégré* (EMOI, Integrated Operational Headquarters), which the Congolese army was setting up in Beni at the time.⁴¹

As a native of Walendu Pitsi, Ndjabu nonetheless soon came to play a critical role for the northern Lendu militias. He flew weapons shipments from the EMOI in Beni to Mongbwalu and then further to Rethy.⁴² From

38 Usalama Project Interviewees #8, #10, #12, and #14, Bunia, August 2012.

39 ICC, Katanga testimony, 28-29 September 2011; Usalama Project Interviewee #12, Bunia, August 2012.

40 ICC, 'Second Corrigendum', paras. 576, 582-583, 591-594, and 661-664; Usalama Project interviews, August and September 2012.

41 ICC, Ndjabu testimony, 30 March 2011, pp. 45-50.

42 ICC, Ndjabu testimony, 30 March 2011, pp. 56-62.

there, Ndjabu and several other northern Lendu then went to Uganda in mid-November, where they eventually met President Museveni at his Rwakitura farm. Having learned that the UPC had secretly received military support from Rwanda even before taking Bunia in August, Museveni was trying to counter Kigali's growing influence in Ituri.⁴³

The Rwakitura meeting included two other delegations opposed to the UPC: one led by Yves Kahwa, a Hema customary chief who had been instrumental in taking Bunia on behalf of Lubanga but then fell out with him and defected from the UPC; the other led by Thomas Unencan, representing communities from Aru and Mahagi territories. Museveni asked these groups to reconcile and subtly referred to his own armed struggle, which the Lendu delegation understood as a hint that they should organize themselves in order to defeat the UPC.

On their way back to Rethy and Kpandroma, Ndjabu discussed the idea of creating a politico-military movement—structurally similar to the UPC—with Augustin Lobo Nyinga, a teacher who had been the Lendu delegation's spokesman at the Rwakitura meeting. Over the following days, this idea was discussed in Kpandroma, and Lobo suggested the name FNI. Despite disagreements with Lendu elders, who were opposed to foreign influence, the Ndjabu group decided to move forward, informally creating the FNI in late November.

One month later, the Ugandans invited the FNI and the UPC to peace talks in Arua, thus publicly recognizing the two groups to be on equal footing—even though the FNI had not yet built either political or military structures. On 23 December 2002, one day before taking off, Ndjabu was formally elected FNI president in Kpandroma. It was only in Arua, however, that the FNI delegation finalized the movement's founding document and began to appoint commissioners. Like the UPC after

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 43 This and the following three paragraphs draw on the Usalama Project interview with Augustin Lobo Nyinga, Bunia, 16 December 2012; ICC, Ndjabu testimony, 8 April 2011, pp. 27–63 and 74–75.

coming to power in Bunia, the FNI deliberately chose executive members from various ethnic groups.

Not only did the UPC delegation refuse to sign any agreement in Arua, but its president Lubanga travelled to North Kivu, where he concluded an alliance with the RCD-Goma. This formal alliance with Rwanda's main Congolese proxy was a clear provocation directed at Uganda.⁴⁴ The stage was thus set for a further escalation of violence in Ituri, pitting Kigali and the UPC against Kampala, Kinshasa, and their new FNI and FRPI allies.

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44 Tamm, *UPC in Ituri*, chapters 2–3.

3. Escalation and intervention

Due to significant support from the Congolese and Ugandan governments in the first half of 2003, the FNI and FRPI achieved a series of military victories against the Rwandan-backed UPC. By June, however, the fighting had worsened to the extent that a multinational intervention force was sent to Bunia. With Uganda having pulled out of Ituri in May and the new transitional government in Kinshasa supporting the intervention, the Lendu militias were once again largely left to their own devices.

Except for the Mongbwalu branch of the FNI, these militias continued to lack cohesion. In other words, the regional alliance shifts that occurred between mid-2002 and mid-2003 gave the decentralized northern Lendu and the fragmented Ngiti militias each a common name and provided them with weapons, but they did not fundamentally alter their organizational structures.

Talking peace, waging war

On 6 September 2002, the Congolese and Ugandan governments had signed the Luanda Agreement, agreeing to put in place a UN-assisted Ituri Pacification Commission (IPC). Uganda had further committed to withdrawing its troops from Bunia within 80 days of the IPC's inauguration.⁴⁵ In the wake of this agreement, Joseph Kabila, who had become president after his father was assassinated in January 2001, and President Museveni began to coordinate their activities with regard to Ituri.

Museveni facilitated contacts between Kabila and Chief Kahwa, which led to the creation—at least on paper—of the *Parti pour l'unité et la sauvegarde de l'intégrité du Congo* (PUSIC, Party for Unity and Safeguarding of the Integrity of the Congo). After the UPC delegation refused to sign the Arua agreement, Museveni then invited the FNI delegation to Kampala for another meeting with Kahwa, by then PUSIC president, as well as

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45 Luanda Agreement, Luanda, 6 September 2002: see Bibliography for URL.

with Unencan, whose delegation from Aru and Mahagi had earlier formed the *Force populaire pour la démocratie du Congo* (FPDC, Popular Force for Democracy in the Congo).⁴⁶ In early February, the three groups together established the *Front pour l'intégration et la paix en Ituri* (FIPI, Front for Integration and Peace in Ituri).⁴⁷

In the words of Ndjabu's former chief of staff, however, the FIPI was 'stillborn'.⁴⁸ At the meeting in Kampala, Ndjabu and Chief Kahwa disagreed on who would become president of the new alliance, eventually leaving the question open. Two additional events in late February and early March then led to FIPI's rupture. First, Lendu and Ngiti militias attacked the strategically important UPC base in Bogoro, killing at least 200 civilians. It is this attack for which Germain Katanga is currently still on trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC), whereas Mathieu Ngudjolo has already been acquitted. Second, Lendu militias attacked the UPC stronghold at Mandro, in Kahwa's chieftaincy, also killing many civilians. Shocked by these massacres, Kahwa officially withdrew from the alliance. Nonetheless, on 6 March 2003, he helped the UPDF and Lendu militias chase the UPC out of Bunia by asking UPC troops loyal to him to retreat.⁴⁹

The ephemeral FNI/FRPI alliance in Bunia

On 18 March 2003, with Bunia firmly under Ugandan control and in the presence of representatives from Kinshasa, all of Ituri's armed groups except the UPC signed a ceasefire agreement, opening the way for the IPC. Meanwhile, FNI and FRPI representatives, as well as Lendu and Ngiti militia leaders whom the two movements had tried to co-opt,

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46 See Appendix for an overview of these and other armed groups linked to Ituri.

47 Usalama Project Interviewee #54, Kinshasa, August 2012; ICC, Ndjabu testimony, 13 April 2011, pp. 23–28.

48 Usalama Project interview with Joseph Chura, Bunia, 20 August 2012.

49 Usalama Project Interviewees #34, #50, #54, and #78, Bunia and Kinshasa, August and December 2012. For details on both ICC trials, see <http://www.katangatrial.org/trial-background>.

moved into Hotel Musafiri in an attempt to establish a joint military high command, backed by Kinshasa.⁵⁰

Confusion prevailed. Interviewees for this report mostly agreed on which commanders were appointed to leading positions but not on who occupied which post. Furthermore, while some began to consider the FRPI as the FNI's military wing—thus referring to all northern Lendu and Ngiti combatants as FRPI—others continued to associate northern Lendu militias with the FNI and Ngiti militias with the FRPI.⁵¹

The three commanders most often named were Katanga, Ngudjolo, and Maître Kiza. ICC prosecutors subsequently failed to prove that Ngudjolo was actually in charge of the Lendu militia from Zumbe that helped fight the UPC on 6 March, but he presented himself as such after the fighting, quickly earning the respect of the UPDF. According to Ngudjolo's own testimony, Ndjabu appointed him deputy chief of general staff in charge of operations. He further suggested that Kiza was made overall chief of staff. It appears that Katanga was initially Kiza's deputy and then took over Kiza's role after his death in battle in May.⁵²

Shortly after the *Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République démocratique du Congo* (MONUC, UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) had helped set up the IPC in April 2003, the Ugandan army began to withdraw. Trying to fill the void, MONUC sent in 720 Uruguayan peacekeepers. They were faced with a chaotic situation: the UPDF's withdrawal, completed by 6 May 2003, allowed the UPC—supplied by Rwanda—to retake the district capital.⁵³

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50 ICC, 'Second Corrigendum', paras. 589–590, 732.

51 Usalama Project Interviewees #6, #12, #38, #56, #79, and #85, Bunia, Kpandroma, and Mongbwalu, August and December 2012.

52 ICC, 'Le Procureur c. Mathieu Ngudjolo', paras. 430–503; ICC, Ngudjolo testimony, 8 November 2011, pp. 55, 74–75: <http://www2.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/doc/doc1422103.pdf>; ICC, 'Second Corrigendum', paras. 732, 736.

53 UN Security Council S/2003/566, 'Second special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo', 27 May 2003, paras. 13–16.

From Artemis to the *acte d'engagement*

During the fighting in Bunia, thousands of civilians sought shelter near MONUC's headquarters, while thousands more fled the city. This bloodshed, which had been widely anticipated, finally led the UN Security Council to authorize an Interim Emergency Multinational Force (IEMF). In response, France initiated the European Union's first autonomous military operation outside Europe, codenamed Artemis. On 6 June, IEMF troops began to deploy in Bunia and swiftly took over control of the city, clashing with armed groups on a few occasions.⁵⁴ But the IEMF mandate was limited to the town and its environs, and was scheduled to last only three months. In the rural areas of Ituri, the violence continued.

After fleeing Bunia, northern Lendu (FNI) and Ngiti (FRPI) militias effectively went their separate ways. Mongbwalu subsequently became the FNI's main stronghold until 2005. Most of its commissioners stayed there, effectively running the city.⁵⁵ Its combatants mined for gold, which was then traded for weapons. The group also profited from business relations with the multinational company AngloGold Ashanti, which started exploration activities in the area. Meanwhile, the FNI's Kpandroma branch forged an alliance with Jérôme Kakwavu's *Forces armées du peuple congolais* (FAPC, Armed Forces of the Congolese People). These were fighters who had controlled Aru and Mahagi territories on behalf of the UPC before splitting off and creating the FAPC in March 2003. That same month, Kakwavu had also helped the FNI to retake Mongbwalu. The FNI coordinator in Kpandroma explained that the FNI at the time had three different branches—in Bunia, Kpandroma, and Mongbwalu—each of which sought alliances for economic reasons. In

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54 IRIN, 'DRC-Uganda: Ituri braces for Ugandan pullout', 17 April 2003; UN Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit (Military Division), 'Operation Artemis: The Lessons of the Interim Emergency Multinational Force', October 2004.

55 Usalama Project interviews with Elisabeth Sakina Buve (former FNI commissioner for social affairs) and Marcélin Ndovya Kambale (former FNI commissioner for agriculture, farming, and fishing), Mongbwalu, 19 December 2012.

Kpandroma's case, the FNI and FAPC shared revenues from the cross-border trade with Uganda.⁵⁶

Between June 2003 and May 2004, FNI and FRPI militias continued to attack Hema civilians in Djugu and Irumu territories, while Hema militias associated with the UPC attacked Lendu villagers. In response, MONUC's Ituri Brigade, which took over from the IEMF in mid-September, arrested Ngudjolo, the Lendu militia leader, in October and transferred him to prison in Kinshasa. Moreover, the Congolese transitional government effectively kept both UPC president Lubanga and FNI president Ndjabu under house arrest at the Grand Hotel in Kinshasa, after they had come to the capital for negotiations in August 2003. Ndjabu, however, managed to escape to Mongbwalu in February 2004.⁵⁷

On 14 May 2004, the negotiations between Ituri's armed groups, the Congolese government, and MONUC culminated in the signing of an *acte d'engagement* (deed of commitment) in Kinshasa, by which representatives of all of the armed groups agreed to cease hostilities and to support the UN-led Disarmament and Community Reinsertion (DCR) programme for Ituri.⁵⁸ This deal marked the beginning of a long, fitful period of demobilization, reintegration, and continued resistance.

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56 HRW, 'The Curse of Gold', pp. 51–83; Usalama Project interview with Herman Ndrugboma Kranjedu, Kpandroma, 17 December 2012.

57 UN Security Council, 'Special Report on the Events in Ituri', pp. 61–62; HRW, 'The Curse of Gold', pp. 40–51; internal MONUC document, on file with the Usalama Project.

58 ICG, 'Maintaining Momentum in the Congo: The Ituri Problem', 26 August 2004, pp. 9–11.

4. Demobilization, reintegration, and resistance

In the period from the signing of the *acte d'engagement* in May 2004 to November 2007, large parts of Ituri continued to suffer from militia activity. Whereas the FNI largely disarmed and transformed into a political party, the FRPI continued its armed resistance, temporarily joining a new rebel alliance that also included some FNI remnants.

Conditions reported by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the period from the *acte d'engagement* to mid-August 2004 also held true for much of the following three years: 'While direct clashes along ethnic lines have decreased, the armed groups have nevertheless continued to harass the local population, collect tax revenues, exploit natural resources and engage in arms trafficking.'⁵⁹ Earlier that year, the FRPI and PUSIC had forged an uneasy alliance in order to share tax revenues from trade passing through Kasenyi. Meanwhile, the cooperation between the FNI and FAPC in northern Ituri had fallen apart.⁶⁰

After the first phase of the DCR programme was launched in September 2004, the dynamics of violence further shifted from an inter-ethnic conflict to one pitting MONUC and the renamed *Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo* (FARDC, Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo) against groups resisting disarmament. While Germain Katanga (FRPI) and Goda Sukpa (FNI) went to Kinshasa in January 2005 to take up their appointments as generals in the FARDC, many of their comrades fought on. At the same time, MONUC began to

59 UN Security Council S/2004/650, 'Third special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo', 16 August 2004, para. 27.

60 Usalama Project Interviewee #21, Bunia, August 2012; UN Security Council S/2004/650, 'Third special report', para. 30.

implement a more robust approach in Ituri, attacking armed groups and cutting off their supply routes.⁶¹

The FNI's political transformation

When nine Bangladeshi peacekeepers were killed in an ambush near Kafe on 25 February 2005, the transitional government and MONUC arrested several leaders of Ituri's armed groups, including FNI president Ndjabu and defence commissioner Pichou Iribi, who were caught in Kinshasa. The two had come to the capital as rivals, both trying to register their armed group as a political party. Following Ndjabu's arrest, his chief of staff Joseph Chura became FNI secretary-general and interim president. In August 2005, the FNI officially transformed itself into a national Congolese party.⁶² By then, around 3,000 FNI combatants had joined the first phase of the DCR programme. This was a significant number, as DCR and MONUC estimates for both FNI and FRPI ranged from 4,000 to 5,000 and almost the entire FRPI refused to participate in this phase.⁶³

At that point, according to its political representatives, the FNI ceased to exist as an armed group and ended any relations with Lendu combatants. The fact that its politicians had initially tried to co-opt all Lendu militias from Djugu now came to hurt the movement, however, as those militia leaders who continued their resistance kept referring to themselves as FNI.⁶⁴ It was at the end of the first DCR phase, in mid-2005, that Mathieu Ngudjolo would reappear in Ituri, trying to bring former enemies together in a new coalition.

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61 International Crisis Group (ICG), 'Congo: Four Priorities for a Sustainable Peace in Ituri', 13 May 2008, pp. 30–31; Dan Fahey, 'How Ituri was Won: MONUC in DR Congo's Ituri District, 2000–2007' (unpublished manuscript), April 2012.

62 Usalama Project interviews with Joseph Chura, Bunia, 20 August 2012, and Michel Kalimi, Bunia, 21 August 2012.

63 ICG, 'Congo: Four Priorities', p. 32; internal MONUC document, on file with the Usalama Project; Tsjeard Bouta, 'Assessment of the Ituri Disarmament and Community Reinsertion Program (DCR)', May 2005, p. 13.

64 Usalama Project Interviewees #73, #74, and #76, Bunia, December 2012.

The MRC and its relations with the FNI and FRPI

In March 2005, Ngudjolo was released from prison in Kinshasa and went back to north-eastern Congo. Together with former RCD-K/ML commander Frank Kakolele Bwambale (a Nande) and UPC president Lubanga's former chief of staff Dieudonné Mbuna (a Hema), Ngudjolo then began to rally those FNI, FRPI, PUSIC, and UPC elements that continued their struggle against a common enemy, the FARDC and MONUC. The *Mouvement révolutionnaire congolais* (MRC, Congolese Revolutionary Movement) was officially created in Jinja (Uganda) in June 2005. Ngudjolo became the MRC president and military commander, whereas Mbuna was named secretary-general, in charge of representing the movement on the political stage.⁶⁵

In Jinja, there were also other commanders who persisted in referring to themselves as FNI, including Justin Lobho and Charif Manda; the FRPI was represented by Jean-Pierre Sambidhu, Dr Adirodu's younger brother. The main FNI militia leader between 2005 and 2007, however, was Peter 'Karim' Udaga, who had uneasy relations with the MRC. Up to 2005, Karim had been a minor commander in Walendu Pitsi. When the DCR programme began, he retreated to the Dhera forest near Kpandroma, setting up a new militia and soon gaining notoriety for banditry and harassment of civilians.⁶⁶

Meanwhile, Ngudjolo, Mbuna, and others went to Walendu Bindi around August 2005, trying to convince Cobra Matata to join the MRC. After Katanga's departure in January, Cobra had become the main leader of the Ngiti militias in Irumu; it was he rather than Sambidhu who effectively controlled the FRPI from 2005 to 2007. Together, these remaining militias then staged several attacks against FARDC and MONUC

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65 Usalama Project interview with Dieudonné Mbuna, Bunia, 22 August 2012; Interviewees #69, #70, #88, and #89, Bunia, October and December 2012.

66 Usalama Project Interviewees #79, #80, #81, and #82, Kpandroma and Rethy, December 2012.

troops.⁶⁷ Between late 2005 and early 2006, Walendu Bindi was particularly hard-hit by fighting. As one community leader put it, ‘everybody lost everything’.⁶⁸

The relations between the MRC and FRPI soon frayed, partly because many Ngiti combatants resented the imported nature of the new movement. When Ngudjolo organized a public MRC congress in his birthplace Kambutso near Zumbe in February 2006, reportedly not a single FRPI representative took up his invitation. Many northern Lendu were also unhappy with his collaboration with Hema combatants, one even accusing him of having betrayed his community.⁶⁹

While the FRPI was pushed back into the Tsey forest, Karim staged an ambitious attack on MONUC troops at the end of May 2006, taking seven peacekeepers hostage. This development, in combination with government attempts to appease remaining militias in time for the general elections held on 30 July, led to increased dialogue between the FARDC, MONUC, and Ituri’s remaining armed groups, as well as the launch of the second DCR phase. In July, all seven peacekeepers were freed, and both Karim and Ngudjolo signed agreements to join the FARDC. Shortly after Kabila’s victory in the presidential run-off elections was announced in mid-November 2006, the FNI-Karim and the MRC renewed their pledges, and Cobra’s FRPI entered into a similar agreement.⁷⁰

It took another 12 months of troubled negotiations, however, before Cobra, Karim, and Ngudjolo finally came to Bunia airport and boarded a plane to Kinshasa in order to take up their new positions in the FARDC. At the same time, the third DCR phase came to an end, disarming 1,858 combatants. Between 2004 and 2007, altogether 24,527 fighters went

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67 Usalama Project Interviewees #69, #70, #88 and #89, Bunia, October and December 2012.

68 Usalama Project Interviewee #13, Bunia, August 2012.

69 Usalama Project Interviewees #84, #88 and #89, Kpandroma and Bunia, December 2012.

70 ICG, ‘Four Priorities’, pp. 33–35.

through the three phases of the programme.⁷¹ While some pockets of resistance remained in both Djuju and Irumu territories, these developments were an important watershed in the fitful pacification of the district.

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71 Fahey, 'How Ituri was Won', pp. 21–31.

5. Fighting on: The FRPI since late 2007

The trajectory of the FRPI from late 2007 until early 2013 can be separated into two parts. The first, up to May 2010, was marked by efforts to re-organize the FRPI after the departure of Cobra Matata and 11 of his key officers, which significantly weakened the group. The second began with Cobra's return to Walendu Bindi, leading to a reinvigoration of the FRPI, new alliances, and another long, drawn-out period of negotiations that have so far failed to achieve any lasting results.

The FRPI without Cobra

While Cobra and most of his top commanders integrated into the FARDC in late 2007, the majority of the FRPI's rank and file stayed behind. The arrest of Kakado, their spiritual leader, in August and the transfer of Germain Katanga to the ICC on 17 October 2007 angered many of the Ngiti combatants, reinforcing their suspicions vis-à-vis the Congolese government. Mbadhu Adirodhu, a simple captain under Cobra, was appointed colonel by his fellow commanders and began to restructure the FRPI. Meanwhile, PUSIC and UPC combatants who had refused to be integrated as part of the MRC joined Mbadhu's men in the Tsey forest area.⁷²

In late January 2008, FARDC and MONUC troops launched the joint operation Iron Stone, swiftly taking the FRPI stronghold Tsey. Only one month later, however, the militia managed to force the FARDC out of the area, which led to suspicions that the *Congrès national pour la défense du peuple* (CNDP, National Congress for the Defence of the People) had helped coordinate the attack. These suspicions were confirmed when the *Front populaire pour la justice au Congo* (FPJC, Popular Front for Justice in the Congo)—a miscellany of militia remnants—emerged on Ituri's scene

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⁷² Usalama Project Interviewees #69, #70, and #88, Bunia, October and December 2012; ICG, 'Four Priorities', p. 5.

around September 2008 and openly acknowledged close links between the two groups.⁷³

The FPJC was led by former FNI and MRC commander Charif Manda, who spent much of his time in Uganda, claiming responsibility for several FRPI attacks while also sending delegates to Walendu Bindi in order to convince Colonel Mbadhu to join his new group. During 2009, the FPJC reportedly operated in the gold mining areas around Aveba (Irumu) and Libi (Djugu). Its attacks displaced around 60,000 to 100,000 people in both territories—despite MONUC estimating the strength of this alliance at only around 200 combatants.⁷⁴

From Cobra's return to COGAI

From late 2009 to May 2010, FRPI elements of the FPJC sporadically clashed with FARDC units and continued to loot civilians in Walendu Bindi.⁷⁵ At the time, many observers believed that the group was merely fighting for survival.⁷⁶ Then, in early June, news broke that Cobra Matata had re-joined the FRPI in Tsey. To the elders of the *collectivité*, this came as 'a real shock'.⁷⁷ During negotiations, Cobra later reportedly gave three reasons for his defection from the Congolese army: he did not obtain a proper position in the army, his housing conditions in Kinshasa were poor, and he did not receive his salary.⁷⁸

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73 ICG, 'Four Priorities', pp. 4–6; UN Security Council, S/2008/773, 'Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC submitted in accordance with paragraph 18(d) of Security Council resolution 1807 (2008)', 12 December 2008, paras. 121–125.

74 Usalama Project Interviewee #88, Bunia, December 2012; UN Security Council, S/2009/603, 'Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC submitted in accordance with paragraph 8 of Security Council resolution 1857 (2008)', 23 November 2009, paras. 241–242.

75 This section builds on Henning Tamm, 'Coalitions and Defections in a Context of Uncertainty – A Report from Ituri', 24 and 27 August 2012.

76 Radio Okapi, 'Ituri: un mort suite aux attaques des miliciens FPJC', 7 April 2010.

77 Usalama Project Interviewee #14, Bunia, August 2012.

78 Usalama Project Interviewee #10, Bunia, August 2012.

After some initial tensions between Cobra and Mbadhu, the latter fell back in line, becoming Cobra's second-in-command. Although the FRPI gained some strength after Cobra's return, it largely remained in the Tsey forest, venturing out into other parts of Walendu Bindi primarily for hit-and-run operations.⁷⁹ Between June and August 2010, the FARDC launched several attacks against the militia but once again failed to dismantle it.⁸⁰ One month later, Charif Manda was arrested in Arua (Uganda) and transferred to Ituri. The FPJC, which had already been weakened before due to Cobra's withdrawal, thus effectively fell apart.⁸¹

According to UN officials, the FRPI remained a minor force throughout much of 2011, numbering at the very most 100 fighters. In the run-up to the general election in November, however, this began to change. Reports emerged about secret visits by Bosco Ntaganda—one of the UPC's main military commanders from 2002 to 2005—to Ituri.⁸² In January 2009, Ntaganda took over the leadership of the CNDP, which integrated into the Congolese army after Nkunda's arrest that month, but continued to run separate chains of command in North Kivu. In late October 2011, the FRPI took control of Gety, forcing the FARDC to flee.⁸³

Then, in February 2012, an army defection occurred in Marabo, around 40 km west of Bunia. The leaders of this mutiny were officers from North Kivu, and several observers suggested a link between the Marabo mutiny and the M23 rebellion in North Kivu, which was launched in April by former CNDP officers including Ntaganda. In fact, observers believed,

79 Usalama Project Interviewees #10 and #18, Bunia, August 2012.

80 Radio Okapi, 'Ituri: les FARDC reprennent 6 bastions des miliciens du FPJC', 24 June 2010; Radio Okapi, 'Ituri: opération «Safisha», 98 miliciens du FPJC et 2 soldats des FARDC tués', 20 August 2010.

81 UN Security Council, S/2010/596, 'Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC, submitted in accordance with paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 1896 (2009)', 29 November 2010, para. 33; Usalama Project Interviewee #88, Bunia, December 2012.

82 Jason Stearns, 'Strongman of the Eastern DRC: A Profile of General Bosco Ntaganda', Rift Valley Institute, 12 March 2013.

83 Usalama Project Interviewees #18 and #22, Bunia, August 2012; Radio Okapi, 'Ituri: la localité de Gety aux mains des miliciens du FRPI', 20 October 2011.

the mutiny in Marabo was supposed to occur simultaneously with M23 defections in the Kivus but had to be brought forward due to a leak. The FARDC commander in charge of operations in Ituri openly accused Marabo ringleader Lieutenant Colonel Germain Bahame of collaborating with the M23.⁸⁴

Concerned by these army defections, General Gabriel Amisi came to Bunia. He wanted to speed up the regimentation process, which he had initiated to restructure the army, and asked soldiers to regroup in several military centres.⁸⁵ The FRPI, whose ranks had doubled from about 250 to 500 due to the defections, took advantage of the security vacuum created by these redeployments, taking control of most of Walendu Bindi.

At the end of February, a delegation of local officials and community leaders met with Cobra in Bukiringi, where he listed the FRPI's conditions for integrating into the FARDC. Someone present at this meeting suggested that Cobra's demands were inspired by the 23 March 2009 agreement between the CNDP and the Congolese government, which later gave the M23 its name. Among other things, Cobra demanded that he and his troops be integrated whilst remaining based in Ituri. For three months, the Congolese government simply did not respond to these demands.

In the meantime, in May 2012, a group of former PUSIC and UPC combatants, mostly Hema, asked Cobra to become the head of a new rebel alliance, the *Coalition des groupes armés de l'Ituri* (COGAI, Coalition of Ituri's Armed Groups), which united several smaller militias that had sprung up in Djugu and Irumu territories in the wake of the M23

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84 Usalama Project Interviewees #18, #22, and #31, Bunia, August 2012; UN Security Council, S/2012/843, 'Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC submitted in accordance with paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2021 (2011)', 15 November 2012, para. 89.

85 This and the following paragraphs are based on Usalama Project Interviewee #18, Bunia, August 2012; also UN Security Council, S/2012/348, 'Interim report of the Group of Experts on the DRC submitted in accordance with paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2021 (2011)', 21 June 2012, paras. 51–52; UN Security Council S/2012/843, para. 83.

rebellion in North Kivu. According to a COGAI representative, the idea of the coalition was born when the combatants heard that Cobra had been asked to form an alliance with the M23, fearing that he might then grow powerful enough to attack their villages.⁸⁶

Since June 2012, Cobra has engaged in further negotiations with Kinshasa, while also remaining loosely affiliated with COGAI and the *Mouvement de résistance populaire au Congo* (MRPC, Popular Resistance Movement in the Congo), an armed group that emerged out of COGAI in August after the latter failed to obtain broader support from the Hema community in Djugu. When the MRPC was decimated by the Congolese army in September, Cobra reportedly granted some of its combatants safe passage towards southern Ituri and North Kivu.⁸⁷

Meanwhile, FRPI fighters regrouped in three camps in Walendu Bindi, receiving some food as well as money and awaiting integration. On 20 October 2012, however, Cobra put forward new demands. Despite several attempts by Walendu Bindi representatives to engage with the FRPI on behalf of the army, negotiations have since then effectively stalled. In early 2013, new tensions arose between Hema and Ngiti, as the former accused the FRPI of extensive cattle looting. Some observers suggested that Cobra—like many of his predecessors—was increasingly losing control over Ngiti combatants. At a press conference at the end of March, he once again stated his demands for reintegration towards the Congolese government.⁸⁸

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86 Usalama Project Interviewee #18, Bunia, August 2012.

87 UN Security Council, S/2012/843, paras. 82–89, 117.

88 Radio Okapi, 'Ituri: le chef milicien Cobra Matata réclame à nouveau d'être amnistié par Joseph Kabila', 27 March 2013.

6. Conclusions and policy considerations

Compared to North and South Kivu, Ituri has witnessed a remarkable decline in violence since 2007. Nonetheless, the situation in the district remains fragile, having worsened since the Marabo mutiny in February 2012. Today, Ituri once again runs the risk of being embroiled in a broader conflict—that of the M23—although it is unlikely to relapse into the cycle of vicious propaganda and reciprocal massacres that characterized the 1999-2003 period, in which the Lendu and Ngiti militias that later formed the backbone of the FNI and FRPI were born.

If Ituri's new and old militias were to unite with groups from North Kivu, they could further destabilize north-eastern Congo. However, Hema-led groups such as the MRPC, which received little support from their community, have been significantly weakened, and Lendu-dominated groups such as the FRPI still appear an unlikely ally for the M23, whose mostly Congolese Tutsi commanders include several former high-ranking UPC officers.

In any case, integrating the FRPI into the army will not be enough to bring lasting peace and stability to Ituri. The history of the armed groups analysed in this report points to several broader policy issues that will need to be addressed to achieve that larger goal.

Beyond integrating the FRPI

The roots of the land disputes that evolved into deadly conflict in 1999, and eventually helped create the FNI and the FRPI, lay in a combination of conflicting perceptions of land property rights, absent or corrupt state authorities, and enormous socio-economic inequalities. External involvement led to the militarization of these disputes, which were then further exacerbated by local, national, and foreign politicians as well as army officers. The exploitation of natural resources, especially gold, by armed groups and the links they forged with transnational trading networks—and, in the case of the FNI and AngloGold Ashanti, even with multinational corporations—helped prolong the fighting. At the same

time, both the FNI and the FRPI had their origins in grassroots efforts of what was perceived as self-defence against injustice and oppression.

Land disputes, security sector and justice sector reform, natural resource governance, and popular grievances towards the authorities—these challenges remain pertinent not only to Ituri but to the country as a whole.⁸⁹

While inter-ethnic tensions remain an issue to this day, especially between Hema and Lendu, most Iturians are united by an immense frustration with the Congolese government, which they consider absent at best and exploitative at worst. Implementing the decentralization process stipulated in the 2006 constitution would be a key step to restoring a modicum of trust in the government. Decentralization, coupled with *découpage* (the creation of new provinces), would upgrade Ituri's status from district to province and bring significant revenues. As a former FNI candidate for parliament put it, this would help 'bring the administration closer to the administered'.⁹⁰ By itself, however, decentralization is unlikely to solve Kinshasa's broader lack of legitimacy.⁹¹

The biggest challenges that the Kinshasa government continues to face lie in reforming the security and justice sectors. FARDC defections, such as the Marabo mutiny, have fed the ranks of Ituri's militias and fuelled popular grievances towards the government. As long as both commanders and rank-and-file fighters see greater promise in joining or creating armed groups than in staying in the army, the cycle of violence and insecurity will continue. Judicial reforms need to begin with tackling impunity within the army but go well beyond that, addressing the politicization and corruption of the judiciary. Despite significant

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 89 Jason Stearns, *PARECO: Land, Local Strongmen and the Roots of Militia Politics in North Kivu* (London: Rift Valley Institute, 2013), chapter 5; Henning Tamm and Claire Lauterbach, 'Dynamics of Conflict and Forced Migration in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Experts workshop report', Oxford: Refugee Studies Centre, January 2011.

90 Usalama Project interview with Célestin Tawara, Bunia, 15 December 2012.

91 Herbert F. Weiss and Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, 'Decentralization and the DRC – An Overview', New York: Social Science Research Council, January 2013, p. 9.

outside support, there have been few improvements in these two sectors, which should give donors reason to reflect on the effectiveness of their programmes.

Partly related to justice sector reform, the issue of land disputes remains an important cause of both inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic tensions in Ituri. Research conducted in 2009 identified no fewer than 1,318 on-going land conflicts in the district: there is no one-size-fits-all solution to these disputes, as their causes vary based on ‘a unique and locally specific combination’ of governance, cultural, demographic, historical, and socio-economic aspects.⁹² In any event, political and customary authorities will need to work together more effectively in order to identify and demarcate land boundaries and help settle disputes over ownership.

Land is but one of Ituri’s key natural resources. Others include ivory, gold, and timber, the trade in which remains dominated by informal dynamics that primarily benefit a limited number of businessmen and officials based in the Congo and Uganda rather than Iturians at large. The little-noticed humanitarian crisis around the Okapi Fauna Reserve in Ituri’s Mambasa territory, where small armed groups have been wreaking havoc while exploiting ivory and gold in connivance with FARDC units, is representative of how criminal army networks and local armed groups cooperate with impunity across the eastern DRC.⁹³ Curbing these informal and often illegal activities will require governance efforts not only by Kinshasa but by all countries, regionally and globally, that profit from this trade.

Apart from these difficult but relatively tangible issues, there is still a need for Iturians to come to terms with their past. National politics prevented the implementation of a truth and reconciliation commission

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92 Joost Van Puijenbroek and An Ansoms, ‘A Legacy from the Past Hindering the Future: Land Conflicts in Ituri (DRC)’, in *Natural Resources and Local Livelihoods in the Great Lakes Region of Africa* (eds. An Ansoms and Stefaan Marysse) (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 62.

93 Dan Fahey, ‘Guest Blog: The Mai-Mai Lumumba: Okapi Killers or Self-Defense Forces?’, 6 September 2012.

(TRC) that was created, in embryonic form, after the conflict peaked. Such a TRC should be reinvigorated through political and financial support from Kinshasa. At the same time, it should be led in coordination with local peace-building organizations, such as Caritas Bunia and Réseau Haki Na Amani, which have done important work in recent years in trying to rebuild inter-ethnic trust and facilitate open discussions of the root causes of violence and socio-economic inequality in Ituri.

Lessons for the Kivus?

Despite all the challenges to lasting peace in Ituri, there has been relatively little conflict since late 2007. Are there lessons that can be applied to North and South Kivu, both of which have continued to be plagued by much more extensive armed group activities? Looking at the history presented in this report and the previous RVI report on the UPC, what were the main causes for the significant decline in violence in the district?

The first crucial factor was Uganda's changing role in Ituri. By late 2002, its enmity with Kinshasa had transformed into an ambivalent partnership, whereas its friendship with Kigali had degenerated into a proxy war fought on Congolese territory. In this context, Kampala and Kinshasa together helped build an alliance of armed groups to defeat the Kigali-backed UPC. When the Ugandan army then pulled out of Ituri, it created a vacuum that led to new heights in inter-ethnic violence. This in turn compelled the international community to send a multinational intervention force to Bunia. Related to this intervention, the second key element was the UN's subsequent decision to strengthen its peace-keeping force and eventually launch robust military operations with the FARDC against Ituri's militias.

These combined developments changed the equation in favour of peace. Politicians began to focus on the 2006 elections, while the business community largely returned to nonviolent means of accumulating wealth. Although neither of these developments can—nor, in fact, should—be reproduced identically in the Kivus, some parallels may be drawn. Whereas Uganda was the key neighbouring power with regard

to Ituri, this role is obviously played by Rwanda in the case of the Kivus. Apart from the Rwandan-Ugandan proxy war, which was unique to Ituri's situation in 2003-4, Uganda's *rapprochement* with Kinshasa had at least two other reasons: a joint interest in exploiting oil reserves along Lake Albert and the Semliki river, as well as significant diplomatic pressure to end its occupation of and interference in north-eastern Congo. A combination of economic incentives and further outside pressure to stop its support of armed groups could, by analogy, help end Rwanda's negative impact on the Kivus.⁹⁴

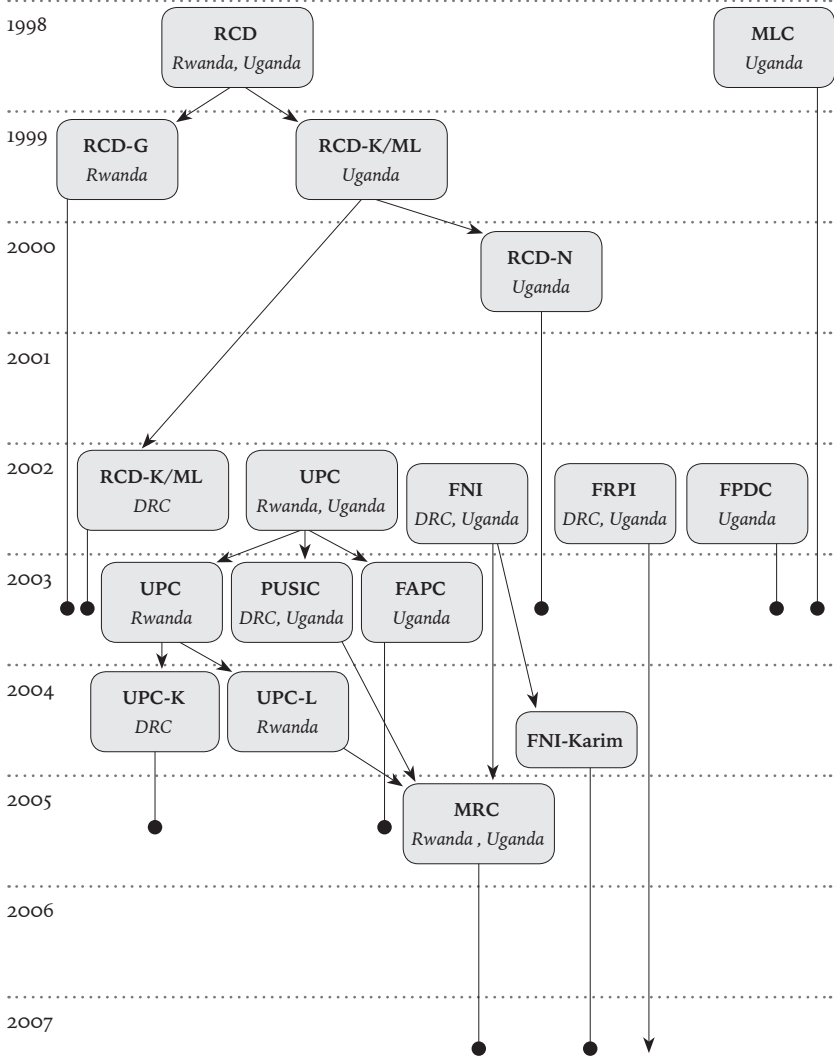
The counterpart to the robust military interventions in Ituri could potentially lie in recent proposals to establish an African peacekeeping brigade for the Kivus within MONUSCO. The fall of Goma in November 2012 showed that the FARDC and MONUSCO, even combined, are far too weak to fight a well-organized armed group such as the M23. The key to success in Ituri was superior military force, coupled with offers of integration into the national army, which put the militias on the defensive and convinced most of their leaders to lay down their weapons. Reproducing a similar situation in the Kivus would not only require enormous troop contributions by several African governments but also a credible and comprehensive disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration plan by Kinshasa.

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94 For specific suggestions in this regard, see Stearns, *From CNDP to M23: The Evolution of an Armed Movement in Eastern Congo* (London: Rift Valley Institute, 2012), chapter 6.

Appendix: Evolution of Congolese armed groups linked to Ituri, 1998–2007

(supporters in italics)



Glossary of acronyms, words, and phrases

<i>acte d'engagement</i>	deed of commitment
APC	<i>Armée populaire congolaise</i> / Popular Congolese Army
<i>autodéfense</i>	self-defence
<i>chefferie</i>	chieftaincy; the largest customary structure of government
<i>collectivité</i>	<i>chefferie</i> (q.v.) or <i>secteur</i> (q.v.)
CNDP	<i>Congrès national pour la défense du peuple</i> / National Congress for the Defence of the People
CODECO	<i>Coopérative de développement économique du Congo</i> / Cooperative for the Economic Development of the Congo
COGAI	<i>Coalition des groupes armés de l'Ituri</i> / Coalition of Ituri's Armed Groups
DCR	Disarmament and Community Reinsertion
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EMOI	<i>État-Major Opérationnel Intégré</i> / Integrated Operational Headquarters
FAPC	<i>Forces armées du peuple congolais</i> / People's Armed Forces of Congo
FARDC	<i>Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo</i> / Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
FIPI	<i>Front pour l'intégration et la paix en Ituri</i> / Front for Integration and Peace in Ituri
FLC	<i>Front de libération du Congo</i> / Front for the Liberation of Congo
FNI	<i>Front des nationalistes intégrationnistes</i> / Front of Integrationist Nationalists
FPDC	<i>Force populaire pour la démocratie du Congo</i> / Popular Force for Democracy in Congo
FPJC	<i>Front populaire pour la justice au Congo</i> / Popular Front for Justice in the Congo
FP LC	<i>Forces patriotiques pour la libération du Congo</i> / Patriotic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo

FRPI	<i>Force de résistance patriotique en Ituri</i> / Ituri Patriotic Resistance Force
<i>Grand Nord</i>	Northernmost part of North Kivu Province (including the area of Beni, Butembo, and Lubero)
Hema	Traditionally pastoralists. Northern Hema or Gegere adopted Lendu (q.v.) lifestyles and language, while the southern Hema assimilated less
Hima	Traditionally pastoralists, living in the former kingdom of Ankole in south-western Uganda. Share historical links with the Hema in the north-eastern DRC
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICC	International Criminal Court
IEMF	Interim Emergency Multinational Force
IPC	Ituri Pacification Commission
Lendu	Traditionally farmers, later acquired livestock from Hema (q.v.) pastoralists who moved into Lendu territory
<i>Mai-Mai</i>	community-based self-defence militias; from <i>maji</i> , 'water' (Kiswahili)
MLC	<i>Mouvement de libération du Congo</i> / Congo's Liberation Movement
MONUC	<i>Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République démocratique du Congo</i> (UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo)
MRPC	<i>Mouvement de résistance populaire au Congo</i> / Popular Resistance Movement in the Congo
MRC	<i>Mouvement révolutionnaire congolais</i> / Congolese Revolutionary Movement
PUSIC	<i>Parti pour l'unité et la sauvegarde de l'intégrité du Congo</i> / Party for Unity and Safeguarding of the Integrity of the Congo
RCD	<i>Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie</i> / Congolese Rally for Democracy
RCD-K/ML	<i>RCD-Kisangani/Mouvement de libération</i> / RCD-Kisangani/Liberation Movement
RCD-N <i>secteur</i>	<i>RCD-National</i> / RCD-National sector; parallel administrative branch

UPC	<i>Union des patriotes congolais</i> / Union of Congolese Patriots
UPDF	Uganda People's Defence Force
<i>usalama</i>	peace, security (Kiswahili)

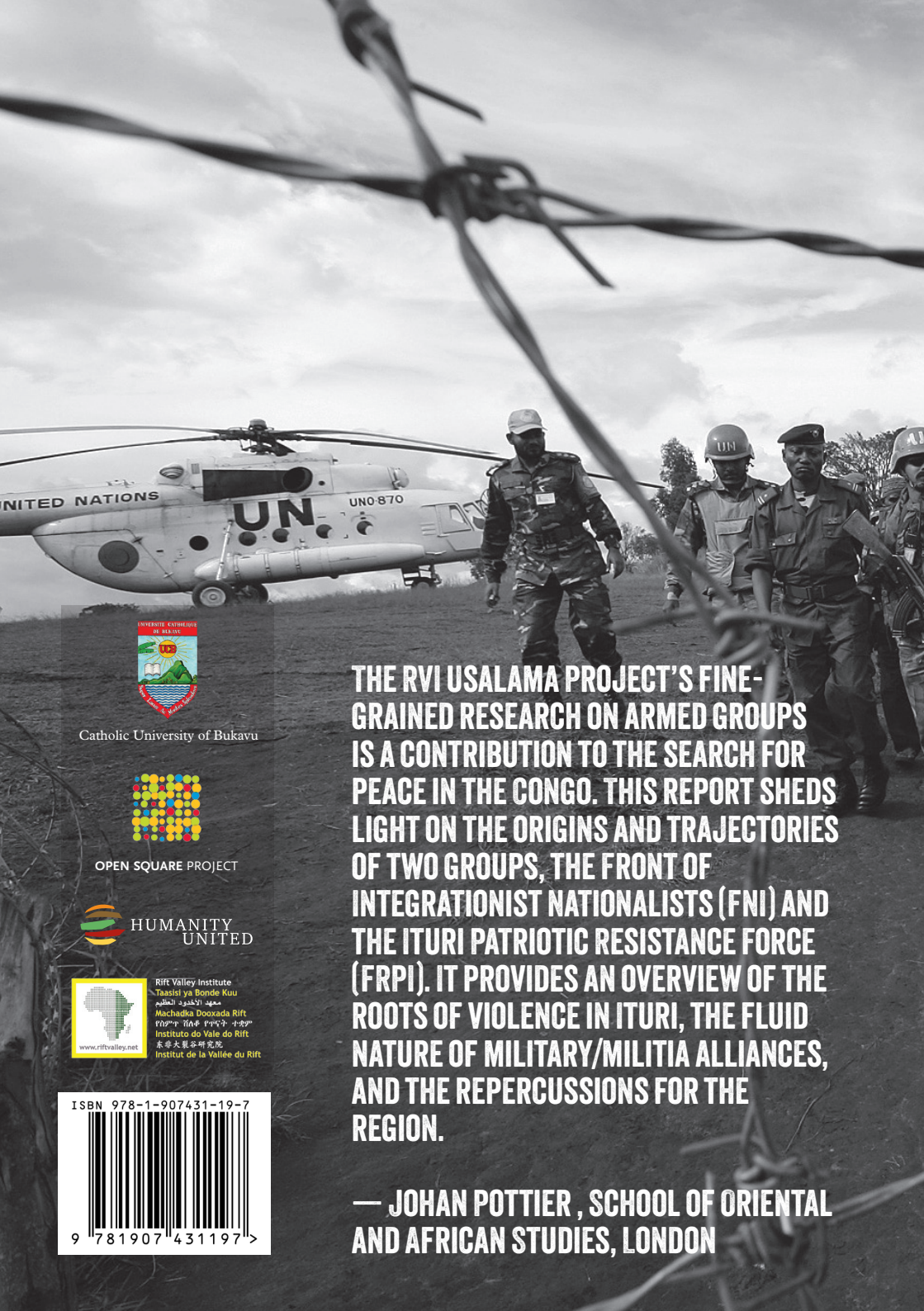
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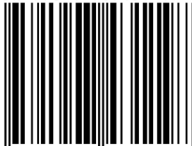


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THE RVI USALAMA PROJECT'S FINE-GRAINED RESEARCH ON ARMED GROUPS IS A CONTRIBUTION TO THE SEARCH FOR PEACE IN THE CONGO. THIS REPORT SHEDS LIGHT ON THE ORIGINS AND TRAJECTORIES OF TWO GROUPS, THE FRONT OF INTEGRATIONIST NATIONALISTS (FNI) AND THE ITURI PATRIOTIC RESISTANCE FORCE (FRPI). IT PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF THE ROOTS OF VIOLENCE IN ITURI, THE FLUID NATURE OF MILITARY/MILITIA ALLIANCES, AND THE REPERCUSSIONS FOR THE REGION.

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