



**DRC: Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 8 June 2011**

**Information since June 2010 on the treatment of members of the MLC in the Democratic Republic of Congo.**

Information on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo for members of the Mouvement de Libération du Congo (MLC) since June 2010 was scarce among sources available to the Refugee Documentation Centre.

An *International Crisis Group* report, in a section titled “A Pluralist Opposition In Search Of Unity”, refers to this party as follows:

“The MLC seems to be in decline and faces competition from the emerging challenge of Vital Kamerhe at the head of the UNC and the historic opposition figure, Etienne Tshisekedi of the UDPS, who returned to the country on 8 December 2010.” (International Crisis Group (5 May 2011) *Congo: The Electoral Dilemma*, p.6)

See also “Appendix C: The Opposition Parties” (section headed “The Congo Liberation Movement (Mouvement de libération du Congo – MLC)”) of this report which states:

“After the departure and later arrest of Jean-Pierre Bemba, François Muamba Tshibimbi, MLC deputy for Kasai Oriental and chair of the parliamentary group, became general secretary of the MLC. However, the party is going through a deep internal crisis because of the presence/absence of its leader, who is trying to lead the movement from The Hague. The party has suffered many defections and expulsions and was eventually unable to hold a congress, announced for April. In August 2010, Roger Nsingi, MLC provincial deputy and president of the Kinshasa provincial assembly was temporarily deposed before being reinstated by the Supreme Court in November 2010 and expelled from the MLC. In February 2011, José Makila, ex-governor of Equateur left the MLC and, in April 2011, François Muamba, general secretary of the party, was expelled by Jean-Pierre Bemba.” (ibid, p.24)

An article published by the *Institute for War and Peace Reporting* states:

“The *Movement for the Liberation of Congo*, MLC, which draws much of its support from the west of the country, was Kabila’s biggest threat in the last election. However, its leader, Jean-Pierre Bemba, is being tried in The Hague for alleged war crimes and is in no position to provide visionary leadership for the party, although he still commands a great deal of support in key areas. It is not yet clear who might lead the party instead of him and, until a strong leader emerges, the MLC is going to remain a weak contender.” (Institute for War and Peace Reporting (31 March 2011) *Kabila Has Little to Fear From DRC Opposition*)

A document published by the *Institute for Security Studies* states:

“The principal opposition in 2006, the MLC, has suffered serious damage since then, not least of all Bemba’s arrest by the ICC in 2008. The party probably inflicted another wound on itself in April 2011, when it ousted Secretary General Francois Muamba. He has been replaced by Thomas Luhaka who has been given the unenviable task of restructuring the party in the run-up to the November elections. The decision to replace Muamba is likely to have far-reaching implications for party unity as there are several senior members who believe he was unfairly dismissed. Though the situation may be smoothed over before November, it remains possible that the MLC will split, further fracturing of an already divided opposition.” (Institute for Security Studies (11 May 2011) *A Changing Political Landscape in the DRC*)

### **References:**

Institute for Security Studies (11 May 2011) *A Changing Political Landscape in the DRC*

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<http://iwpr.net/print/report-news/kabila-has-little-fear-drc-opposition>

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International Crisis Group (5 May 2011) *Congo: The Electoral Dilemma*

[http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/central-africa/dr-congo/175%20Congo%20-%20The%20Electoral%20Dilemma%20ENGLISH.ashx](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa/central-africa/dr-congo/175%20Congo%20-%20The%20Electoral%20Dilemma%20ENGLISH.ashx)

(Accessed 8 June 2011)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

### **Sources Consulted:**

Amnesty International  
Electronic Immigration Network  
European Country of Origin Information Network  
Freedom House  
Google  
Human Rights Watch  
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada  
Institute for Security Studies  
Institute for War & Peace Reporting  
Institute of Race Relations

International Crisis Group  
Lexis Nexis  
Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database  
UK Home Office  
UNHCR Refworld  
US Department of State