

## UN Releases 'heartbreaking' human rights report on Congo

CNN Wire Staff

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(...) The period covered by this report is probably one of the most tragic chapters in the recent history of the DRC," the report says. "Indeed, this decade was marked by a string of major political crises, wars and multiple ethnic and regional conflicts that brought about the deaths of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people." The report devotes attention to violence against women and children. (...) "This report highlights the apparently recurrent, widespread and systematic nature of these phenomena and concludes that the majority of the incidents of sexual violence reported, could if judicially proven, constitute offences and violations under domestic law, international human rights law, and international humanitarian law." (...) "If this situation is allowed to continue, there is a risk that a new generation will be created that has known nothing but violence, and violence as a means of conflict resolution, thus compromising the country's chances of achieving lasting peace," the report says.

Rwandan forces and an allied rebel group massacred ethnic Hutus in the country, the report says. (...)

Ieka Atoko, Congo's ambassador to the United Nations, welcomed the publication of the report and called it "detailed," "credible," and "heartbreaking."

"The Congolese government, and I personally, are appalled at the horrific nature and scope of crimes documented in this report that the people of the Congo have suffered," Atoko said.

"Sadly, this information is not new to us. Millions of Congolese men, women and children have borne the brunt of the Congo's conflicts over the past 15 years. Far too many have died. Like nearly all Congolese, I too lost loved ones in the war.

Atoko said justice must be meted out for the crimes.

"Far too often, Congolese voices go unheeded. I truly hope that this time it is going to be different."

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