

The **Responsibility to Protect**-Engaging Civil Society (**R2PCS**) Project would like to share some recent articles, reports and civil society initiatives addressing the mounting crisis in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Although violence in the DRC has been a prevalent feature of everyday life for much of the past 50 years, the escalation of violence in the past few weeks has led to reports of increased rape, forced displacement, and mass killing, amounting to crimes against humanity one of the four crimes and violations covered by the **Responsibility to Protect**

The five year civil war in the DRC, from 1998-2003, claimed four million lives and subjected countless civilians to displacement, rape, abduction, and torture. Despite the amount of human suffering in Africa's first World War there has not been a cessation of violence since the end of the war, and fragile peace agreements have been broken and violated over and over again. Human Rights Watch now estimates that 5 million people have been killed since 1998, either directly, or through malnutrition and disease.

The latest round of violence, following the dissolution of a UN brokered ceasefire between the government of DRC and Laurent Nkunda's rebel forces, has led to massive fleeing and a high increase in rape as a weapon of war. According to UNHCR, at least 100,000 people have been displaced in the last few weeks in North Kivu, resulting in a total of 1 million displaced in the area. Crimes against humanity appear to be undertaken by all armed groups involved in the conflict and have been perpetuated by a culture of impunity. Furthermore, there are fears that the conflict could spill over once again into the DRC's nine neighbors as the Hutu-Tutsi ethnic tensions that are already prevalent and have plagued Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi, may be reignited.

The **Responsibility to Protect** demands that the international community take decisive and timely action in the face of crimes against humanity, when the government is unwilling or unable to protect its populations. In the past week, there have been media reports and civil society calling for action, some of which are compiled below.

Compiled Statements, articles and reports can be found here: http://www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/latest_news/1926

Articles Included:

I. R2P and DRC in the News

1. THE NEW YORK TIMES CONGO, A LITTLE FIGHTING BRINGS A LOT OF FEAR
2. EVE ENSLERHE BEGINNING OF HOPE OR THE END OF IT
3. TIME MAGAZINE--WHY CONGO'S PEACEKEEPERS ARE COMING UNDER FIRE
4. DR. JOSEPH KATSHUNG YAV--WHEN REALITY CONTRADICTS RHETORIC
5. DR. RORY KEANE.U. BATTLEGROUP MUST BE DEPLOYED TO CONFLICT IN CONGO

II. U.N. Security Council Presidential Statements on DRC

1. 21 OCTOBER 2008 STATEMENT
2. 29 OCTOBER 2008 STATEMENT

III. Featured Letter from Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

1. OPEN LETTER TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL CONCERNING THE SITUATION IN DRC

IV. Other Civil Society Initiatives

1. OXFAM INTERNATIONAL- OXFAM CALLS FOR EU TROOPS TO SUPPORT UN PEACEKEEPERS IN CONGO
2. OPEN SOCIETY INITIATIVE FOR SOUTH AFRICA PEACEFUL RESOLUTION TO THE CRISIS IN THE CONGO
3. ENOUGH CAMPAIGNVERTING RENEWED REGIONAL WAR IN EASTERN CONGO
4. WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONALALL FOR ACTION TO STOP FIGHTING IN DRC
5. HUMAN RIGHTS WATCHINTERNATIONAL LEADERS SHOULD ACT NOW TO PROTECT CIVILIANS