



## IPI POLICY FORUM

### **HUMANITARIAN ACTION IN DRC: RETROSPECTIVE ON LAST 5 YEARS AND OVERVIEW OF CONTINUING CHALLENGES**

*TRANSCRIPT EDITED BY IPI*

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Warren Hoge: We're going to start a little early today, because we are beginning with a few minutes of introduction from me and then a 12-minute film which you can watch while you continue eating, so would you please fill your plates and take your seats now.

Good afternoon, I am Warren Hoge, IPI's Vice President and Director of External Relations, and I am pleased to welcome you to this Policy Forum on the subject: Humanitarian Action in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC): Retrospective on the Last 5 Years and Overview of the Continuing Challenges.

IPI is presenting this luncheon meeting in partnership with OCHA, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and I am delighted that we have with us today the head of that office, Under-Secretary- General John Holmes.

Joining him on the panel are two very distinguished international public officials, Ann Veneman, who recently visited the DRC in her capacity as the Executive Director of UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, and Ross Mountain, who this month ends a 36-year-long United Nations career, the last five of which he spent as Humanitarian Coordinator in the DRC.

I will limit my introductions to that and note that their full biographies are printed with today's program and list of guests, available at the door as you came in.

IPI does a lot of work in this area through our emphasis on peace operations, mediation, conflict prevention, protection of civilians and state fragility and our focus on this region through our Africa Program. But I will dispense with remarks introducing our subject because in the people I have just named, we have others far better equipped than I to do it.

John Holmes will provide us a general overview on the humanitarian situation as it currently stands and discuss the current challenges stemming from the crisis in the East.

Ann Veneman will tell us of UNICEF's work in the East of the country and cooperation with operational partners.

And Ross Mountain will recap humanitarian action in the DRC over the five years he has spent there, particularly innovations such as the Cluster Approach and the Pooled Fund. He will also touch on the cooperation between humanitarians and MONUC, the peacekeeping force there, on protection of civilians.

And now to the film:

This past August, OCHA's Advocacy and visual Media Unit undertook a three-week mission to the DRC to gather materials in support of the 2010 Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP) to be released at the end of this month.

Today's presentation represents a sneak peak of three segments to be included in the final film. Each segment is intended to focus on one humanitarian indicator represented in the upcoming action plan.

The three segments refer to humanitarian action in the areas of (1) community development (2) nutrition and health (3) protection of civilians.

A final version of the movie will be circulated broadly for advocacy purposes among donor countries, the broader public and especially through various channels in the DRC.

So Dan DeLorenzo, let it roll:

*THE FILM PLAYS. AFTERWARDS MR. HOGE INVITES SIR JOHN HOLMES TO COMMENT.*

John Holmes: The Democratic Republic of Congo has been one of the most serious humanitarian crises in the world over the last five years. It still is.

The factors aggravating this crisis can be summarized as follows:

-- acute humanitarian emergency situations linked to continuing armed conflicts and general insecurity, on the one hand, and  
--chronic, underlying structural problems linked to the lack of infrastructure and state service -- the absence, in many ways, of the state itself -- and generalized impunity.

That's particularly true of the East, but it's also true of much of DRC and we should not imagine that the humanitarian problems and some of these underlying problems of poverty are just confined to the east, because they are not.

So the situation is that we have hundreds of thousands of people who are continuing to flee their homes. We have others who are returning -- I'll come back to this in a moment -- after months or, in some cases, years of absence, but they're often coming back to communities which are facing conditions of acute and chronic vulnerability. There are many deaths every day due to avoidable diseases, and of course, millions of people, and more particularly, children, are suffering from malnutrition in various stages, as we saw very graphically in the film just now.

Displacement is one of the biggest issues that we have to face on the humanitarian side in the east. It's a mixed picture, if we're honest. There have been significant positive developments in some places. In Ituri, which was the focus of so much of the crisis a few years ago, more than two million people have actually returned home in the last few years, and that's a considerable success, even if there are still some issues left there.

Around Goma, where there were so many problems a year ago, I think something like 300,000 people, again, have returned from the camps to their homes in the last few months and that's, again a significant success and very good to see.

But there are also, still, two million people, two million IDPs [Internally Displaced Persons] in the Kivus, and that number has been rising again recently because of the activities of the FDLR [Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda], the former genocide from Rwanda, and the consequences of military operations involving them. And again, I'll come back to that a little bit later.

One worrying thing is the average duration of displacement in some areas has been increasing, and that means that the provision of assistance for these kinds of prolonged displacements becomes a major challenge. It means that they are living amongst host communities very often, not always in camps, by any means, and this means that the host families, the host communities, also face huge problems because their own coping mechanisms are eroded and the general population finishes up being even more impoverished than before.

The overall background is one of some progress on the political side, some progress in relations between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda, and that's resulted most particularly in the disappearance of General [Laurent] Nkunda from the scene, which was, I think, extremely positive, and the disbandment – to some extent, not finished – of his group, the CNDP [National Congress for the Defense of the People] , and that's helped to, for example, encourage the return of people around Goma. Again, that's still very fragile.

But there are still many other armed groups extremely active the Kivus, particularly, again, the FDLR, but there's also other groups like the Mai-Mai, and the alphabet soup is well known to all of you, I'm sure, and they remain an absolutely fundamental problem for the civilians in the area.

And the activities, in particular of, again, as the film brought out, most recently of the Lord's Resistance Army, who've been driven out some years ago from northern Uganda, took refuge in the northern DRC, because of military operations against them in part, have been posing a huge risk to the population in recent months. Since January 2009, I think there have been a total of 275 attacks on totally defenseless villages by the LRA, 700 people or more killed and 1,300 abducted, including many children, which, of course, is a hallmark of the LRA practice around the world.

So, the activities of these armed groups – and I'm afraid, unfortunately, also the activities, in many cases, of the government's own security forces – are behind often horrific violations of human rights, horrific abuses, crime of all kinds, and particularly the appalling scourge of sexual violence which has been well documented, but I'm afraid is not, despite all the efforts, gone away at all. The figures for this year are, indeed, worse than ever.

Because there are still huge problems there of how we're going to reform the security sector, not only dismantling and integrating these illegal armed groups I've been talking about, but how we're going to help the armed forces of the Congo to be the kind of disciplined, well-equipped, well-trained force which they need to be if they're going to protect civilians and not be a problem for the civilians themselves. So there were some huge issues there about their payment, about their ability to be housed and fed adequately, which certainly contribute to the problem.

For all these reasons – the protection of civilians, the protection of civilians of all kinds, but most particularly, perhaps, women and children, remains the number one priority for all the humanitarian actors in the DRC, quite apart from the provision of the basics of life for those who are displaced or otherwise in need. And unfortunately, the environment is characterized by a failure, if we're honest with ourselves, by all concerned, to provide that adequate protection of civilians.

Now, the peacekeeping force, MONUC, is often criticized for its role in this, given that protection of civilians is mandated to be, by the Security Council, its single highest priority.

MONUC can obviously, I think, do better in this area, and this is partly linked to the wider discussions we've been having this week about protection of civilians, and in particular about protection of civilians mandates in peacekeeping missions, which has been the subject of a recent study by Archer – sorry, an independent study commissioned by Archer and DPKO [Department of Peacekeeping Operations], and which has brought out a number of issues there which, obviously, apply in many cases to MONUC too.

At the same time, I think people are, I hope, aware that expectations, particularly for MONUC, have been set much too high, much beyond any reasonable limits. In the DRC, there have been some useful steps forward. The deployment of joint protection teams is an innovation brought in by MONUC. The mission and the UN country team have been putting together an overall systematic strategy for protection of civilians, which we hope will begin to make a difference. They have a comprehensive strategy for addressing sexual violence which is in place and is being implemented, although, as I say, it's very hard to see or to achieve very quick results in this area.

And of course, the huge area that MONUC has to operate, and the relatively small force it represents, compared to that huge area and the intractability of many of its problems, many of the problems of the area, mean that we need to be realistic about what we can expect from MONUC even if we all wanted to see it improve its performance.

This kind of situation we've had in the eastern provinces in recent years has required a lot of effort, a lot of agility, I would say, by humanitarian actors on the ground, including the development of innovative aid coordination and aid delivery mechanisms to allow for adjustments to a context which tends to change extremely rapidly.

And I think it's fair to say that the humanitarian community in the DRC, under the leadership of Ross Mountain, has been at the forefront of trying to put into effect, with a good deal of success, some of the humanitarian reform measures which have been taken – the cluster approach, pool financing both at local level and global level through the surf, and of course other elements of the General Humanitarian Good Donorship initiative.

And I think that given the immense scale of the crisis in DRC and its long-lasting nature, I think the humanitarian community there has done a remarkable job. And of course, it's only able to do that because the donors have been very generous in funding, particularly in recent years when I think we've managed to – again, largely through Ross's own efforts – raise the profile of the crisis and the kind of support we need.

Just to give you a couple of small examples, in 2009 so far, more than 2.8 million people have actually been provided with food assistance, more than a million people have access to clean water as a result of the humanitarian efforts. There are 55,000 children benefiting in educational programs, and almost 7,000 victims of sexual violence have gained access to treatment in rehabilitation centers. Treatment and rehabilitation are one thing, as I say,

preventing that sexual violence is another, but at least we've been able to help, to some extent, in the treatment and rehabilitation side.

But the challenges remain absolutely enormous. We still face huge needs resulting from the current situation, and not least from the latest, some of the latest developments, and that's particularly the case of the Congolese armed forces, the FARDC [Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo] military operation against the FDLR, known as Kimia 2, which is supported by MONUC.

I think, as many of you are well aware, this has led to very severe humanitarian consequences. The military operation itself, including FDLR reprisal attacks on civilians and, of course, I'm afraid, some exactions by the Congolese armed forces themselves. I'll come back to that in a second.

We then face the LRA attacks I've already talked about, in the north of the country, and groups like the Mai- Mai are continuing to live off the population, to attack populations and to harass civilians.

The Kimia II operation I mentioned has raised a huge concern amongst the humanitarian community about whether it's doing more harm in the shape of the disastrous humanitarian consequences I've been talking about, than good, in the shape of actually weakening the FDLR and, therefore, whether MONUC should withdraw its support for that operation.

I think the point to make is, this is a real dilemma, and it's a real dilemma which the leadership, both in the DRC itself and here in New York is extremely conscious of and keeping under review the whole time. There's no silver bullet here. There's no magic armistice here. There are only bad solutions and less bad solutions.

What I would remind everybody is that unless the underlying causes of instability in the eastern DRC are tackled, and that is largely, or one of the main issues there is, indeed, the presence of the FDLR and all the consequences that flow from that. Unless those underlying causes are tackled, we will never get out of the downward spiral. This operation is an attempt to do that.

So we need, in looking at these things, to be careful what we wish for. If MONUC withdraws its support from this operation, does that mean the operation stops? No, it does not. It means the operation goes on without the safeguards that MONUC can build into it, not least by feeding the troops – they have less need to live off the population, for example, but a restraining influence would be gone. And if MONUC, by some missed chance, were not there anymore, or to draw in the near future, I think all you can say is, whatever MONUC's weaknesses may be, the consequences for the civilian population, I think, will be much worse. So I think we need to have that very clearly in mind when we're making these kinds of criticisms.

A couple of other final points: one is that we face a major challenge at the moment in continuing these humanitarian assistance operations in a context where we're also trying to provide for reconstruction and redevelopment and stabilization. So we need to make sure that whatever we're doing on the humanitarian side is properly complementary to the new recovery programs. There's a government program called STAREC; there's a UN Security and Stabilization Support Strategy. We need to make sure that all we're doing is coherent across all these areas and that humanitarian operations are fitting in with what we hope will be the longer-term recovery.

One final point: I hope it's clear from what I've said and what I think you're all aware of already, that this is a very complicated and difficult humanitarian situation. If we're going to tackle it, really good strong, visionary leadership is required and I want to say that that's what we've had for the last five years in DRC under the leadership of Ross Mountain, who is here with us today. He's been doing that for the last five years. This is his last day in UN service, but not his last day in humanitarian service, I'm glad to say, because he's moving onto other challenges.

But there is probably no bigger challenge for any humanitarian coordinator that exists in DRC, with the possible exception of Sudan, but I think DRC is, in many ways, even more challenging. I just want to pay tribute to Ross's efforts from this platform, as I'll be doing in other ways later in the day. But Ross, thank you very much for all you've done and all the best for – not your retirement, but for your next steps. We really do thank you for your dedication, not only to the DRC, but also to the UN, over the last, I think it's 36 years, but it might even be longer than that. So thank you very much Ross. Let me stop there.

Warren Hoge: Thank you John. We will, of course, hear from Ross Mountain eventually, but first we want to hear from Ann Veneman, UNICEF, and the recent trip you made to the DRC.

Ann Veneman: Well thank you very much. It's my pleasure to be here with such a distinguished panel. It's always great to see Warren and see him continuing to do the important work he does for the international community. John Holmes does a terrific job. As you can see, he has to manage so many different humanitarian issues, and it's been – he's a terrific colleague to work with, and of course, Ross Mountain

I had the opportunity to first go to the DRC almost four years ago now, and I went with my colleagues, Antonio Gutierrez from UNHCR and Jim Morris from the World Food Program. We did a joint visit – this is an unusual thing in the UN, I might add – and Ross was with us the whole time. But it was my first exposure, personally, to see what was going on in the East, and it was really horrifying.

I just went back again in August and I must say things, in many ways, and particularly when it comes to the sexual violence, are not getting better. If you speak to those who are dealing with many of the victims, the caseload is getting bigger. There are more women being raped. It's women, it's children, and now it's even men.

In fact, one of the things I did on this trip was I spent – I actually planned it this way, to spend quite a lot of time talking to victims, so I could really understand their stories, and I did speak to a male victim about his experience of being brutalized and forced into unspeakable sexual acts with soldiers. And so it's not just about rape as a weapon of war against women, it's children, it's men, it's communities, it's burning villages, killing people, and it really is a very difficult thing to hear the many, many stories.

I think one of the things, also, this is not something that is going to be easily fixed in the short term. I mean I met with many women who had been raped three or four years ago, and they were still suffering the impacts. One woman told me – this is the story of many women – their husbands were either killed in the attack or they left them from shame, leaving them with children, leaving them with virtually nothing. One woman told me that because she had almost nothing, one of the hardest thing she had to do was make a decision of which of her eight children to send to school, because she could only send one. So the impact on education, I think, is clear.

I also left this last trip with a concern about the longer-term impact on children, not just from being denied health and education and nutrition, but seeing this violence, living this

violence, and how do you actually understand what the longer-term impact may be? And I think this is something that we have to recognize, that these children growing up in this violence, watching homes get burned, watching people get killed, raped, it's hard to determine what the impact may be.

There are many things that are going on. There are wonderful hospitals there, including the one that the Secretary General visited called "Heal Africa" in Goma, repairing these women who have been brutally raped; another one in Bukavu called the Panzi Hospital, which is assisting these victims of rape. These are programs, also that UNICEF and other NGOs support.

One of the things that UNICEF is now doing in conjunction with an organization some of you may know called V-DAY, is we are supporting the building of something called the City of Joy, which will be an opportunity to train women who have been victims of rape, who've been repaired in these hospitals, and then send them back to their communities to begin with skills, with skills in not only making a living, but also skills in empowering others in the community to rebuild. And so I think these are some of the kinds of programs that hopefully will have a longer-term impact in terms of helping communities.

It's also important to look at just the overall situation in the DRC. I mean this is a country that has so little infrastructure, it's such a long way from Kinshasa, the capital, to the East. You have to fly there. I mean there are virtually no roads – or get there from Rwanda. And so the infrastructure is lacking, the education, the health systems – the under-five mortality rate is somewhere just under 200 out of 1,000, so you have about a one-in-five chance of dying before your fifth birthday if you're a child born in the DRC. The lifetime risk of maternal mortality in the DRC, for a woman, is one in 13. That compares to one in 8,000 in the industrialized world.

So you can see that the indicators there are not among the best for either women or children. The nutrition issues, which you saw in the film, are very important. And we just, in fact, UNICEF just released a nutrition report this week. The DRC is among those of the highest burden under nutrition countries in the world.

And this is a big concern. You saw these very small children. This is another potential long-term impact, because the critical time for nutrition of a child is the thousand days from the time the child is conceived to the second birthday. And you cannot only have loss of – lifelong loss of physical ability, but also cognitive ability. And, therefore, you impact the ability to learn in school, earn as an adult, and perpetuate that cycle of poverty.

So this nutrition issue, which was referred to in the film, which John referred to, is critical. UNICEF has done a tremendous amount in treatment of severe acute malnutrition and trying to address these issues, but it is a very serious issue there as well.

I wanted to, before I finished, I wanted to say a word about also Dungeness and the LRA. I had the opportunity, after I left Bukavu and Goma, which I'd visited before, to go to Dungeness where the LRA has had the impact you saw in the film.

One of the things – you saw how green it is, it is quite a good area for producing food and agriculture. And it's, frankly, quite a beautiful area, but the thing that was happening there was it had one of – before the LRA came in – it had one of the lowest rates of malnutrition. People were quite well nourished there. But the malnutrition rates have gone way up because people can't get into their farms, as you saw in the film. So that's one impact.

The other impact, of course -- and these are programs that UNICEF supports, and I had the opportunity to visit with several of the children who were participating in this program -- are these children who had been abducted by the LRA, and now they're finding them throughout southern Sudan. If they're from the DRC they bring them to Dungu to determine how they're going to find their families and how they're going to get them back to their communities. So this has been a very effective program, and I must say the humanitarian workers up there are working in very difficult conditions.

The other thing that UNICEF has been very involved in is both the negotiation for release of child soldiers, as well as the rehabilitation of child soldiers, so we have a number of programs to assist in getting these children educated, getting them psycho-social help, and then reintegrating them back into communities. And this has been very important as well, but again, it's a long-term process. These children need to be followed. There has been a problem with re-recruitment with some of them if they don't have other things to do, and so the humanitarian situation, while progress has been made -- the programs there are significant. Many people have been reached, as John Holmes says, but I must say, the problems are immense and it is disheartening when you continue to hear from Panzi Hospital and Heal Africa, that the caseload continues to increase.

Hoge: Thank you Ann. We actually had Dr. Denis Mukwege, who is the founding doctor at the Panzi Hospital, come here about six months ago and speak to us all about this situation which, unfortunately, may be worse now than it was then.

Ross Mountain, I'm sure you're making lots of valedictory addresses. I'm glad that you have a chance to make one of them here.

Ross Mountain: Thank you very much, Warren, and it's certainly a pleasure to have the opportunity with Ann and John to say a few words on DRC this afternoon. And I really do want to thank all who have come along, both with Ann and John who have been not only good visitors, if I may say so, but extraordinarily keen supporters. And as we know, in this day and age of 24/7 news, one needs to try and work extra hard to keep the focus of public interest even on dramas as deep and prevailing as DRC. So your interest here today is very much appreciated.

John and Ann have covered, I think, the broad range of issues that confront us at the moment. I'd like to perhaps focus on a couple of dimensions. One is -- perhaps just to underline a little bit, the scale and context of the situation that we deal with. Eight years ago, this was Africa's world war: nine armies, nine foreign armies, essentially battling each other, battling through militia groups as well, but indeed trying to claim a disproportionate share of Congo's extraordinary risk resources.

There are nine neighbors of the Congo. It is the size of, as we say, of western Europe, without roads it's -- in the US I think it's the size of the US east of the Mississippi. It's large, and it obviously is hard to conceive progress in Africa with this huge continent-sized country being a failed state in the middle. So the stakes are even higher than the 60 million individuals in the country that have suffered for just so long.

John touched on some of the statistics, but the International Rescue Committee's regular reviews that they do every two years have shown that we are losing 1,500 Congolese each and every day from preventable causes. That's 45,000 a month, that's as we again say, an Asian tsunami every six months. Half of them are kids under five. The average child born in the DRC, one in five doesn't make it to the age of five -- these are pretty stark statistics -- 70% of the population below the poverty line.



I think we got a rather stark taste of life, in particularly the last two segments, in the extraordinary film that was presented at the beginning of this, and obviously, I'm looking forward to seeing the full version, which I do commend and thank OCHA for having organized for us.

The complexity of it – we tend to focus, and I've been here this week, on the East. And of course, what's happening in the East is dramatic. I wish it was only the East that we had to worry about. In fact, one of the film segments here, of course, is on the LRA, which is the north, it's Haut- and Bas Uele, the size of a couple of Frances, these areas. And when the LRA attacked, and the people that were killed and the statistic that you saw, were not shot – none of them were shot – they were bludgeoned to death. They saved their bullets. They were mostly women and children, and of course you've seen the kids that have been, particularly kids that have been taken as hostages and converted also to the cause of the LRA.

The consequence of that was the obvious natural terror of the population. So you don't actually need many LRA cadres to approach a village. The mere rumor that a few of them are heading in that direction is enough to empty them. We have about 260,000 IDPs in Haut-Uele at the present time.

One is also confronted with, perhaps a more banal, but unfortunately a rather large consequence along the border with Angola. There has been a tradition of a large-scale, largely artisanal mining going on in northern Angola. And about 160,000 of those have now been rejected, sent back, pushed back to the Congo, sadly, often badly treated by the border guards, particularly the women, which has caused, in fact, a reciprocal ejection of another 49,000 Angolans who were living peaceably in the DRC.

This sort of thing, unfortunately, or maybe fortunately, I don't know, it doesn't hit the media – but obviously, the extent of that sort of suffering is evident. And indeed, just last week an inter-tribal dispute over land and fishing rights in Équateur, in the West, has had 22,000 refugees pouring into the Congo, Congo Brazzaville.

The situation, the drama of the Congo is, unfortunately, not just a regional one then. It's not East, it's not West or North. It relates to the complexity of the country and its status, really, as a fragile state. It has indeed made a number of steps, considerable steps in progressing. But the neglect, the deliberate mismanagement, corruption, predatory militia and armies, has left the population extraordinarily scarred and indeed, in the state that you've heard this afternoon, and I'm sure most of you know from before.

There is a need to deal with it nationally in the context that John has put it, as well as, of course, dealing with the population that continues to suffer from the consequences of the lack of progress.

There is, however, progress, and it's not all bad news. I have mentioned, perhaps, the elections which were an opportunity for the people of the country to give an indication that they actually wanted to get out of the misery they're in, select their leaders, and this has been a process of holding the leadership of the country accountable for the improvements that must come to their lives.

What they hope for has yet to be delivered. It's easier to have elections and rather harder to deliver the demands of the population after that. But you now have a very vibrant civil society as well is pushing in that direction, and the structures exist for these kind of demands.

We have had, we have about 1.6 million displaced in the Kivus, but in fact, a couple hundred thousand people have, in fact, been able to go back home. There are returnees, and that is at least a sign of hope. One is even looking at the return of refugees from neighboring countries, again, with their complications and potential for involvement in local disputes with land problems, but at least that's a step in the right direction.

The one area that I'd just like to touch on a bit more in detail, is the whole issue of protection of civilians – the number one mandate of MONUC, and indeed, something that we have tried to pay particular attention to within the limits and capacities that are available on the ground.

One of the things I discovered when I first arrived, which is roughly five years ago now, was that it was – I visited into north Kivu and there had been a fight between two ostensible pieces of the national army. And the population that we visited, who had been in the midst of this, needed food, they needed shelter, they needed healthcare, but above all, they really wanted protection. They wanted freedom from having to go to bed worried about whether they were going to wake up and find that their spouse had been raped in the course of the night, or they were going to be attacked. And indeed, they rejected humanitarian assistance because they were afraid that the population – that the militia would come and go after that with them, if they had it.

And protection is the number one humanitarian requirement in the Congo, and I would fairly say, I think in most countries in the kind of conflict beset the Congo at the moment. What we've been able to do is try and get an understanding between the UN Peacekeepers and the humanitarians who, most of you will know, this kind of relationship has not always been as smooth as it might be. I think of Iraq where the – then I think it was weapons inspectors rather than military – who used to call the humanitarians tree huggers, and the rejoinder was "Rambos".

But anyway, this has never been the smoothest of relationships, but it was important that one came to recognize that protection of civilians, which is something that humanitarians want, something that is a military mandate of MONUC is actually physical protection, is a military action, can be aided by that. Even humanitarian actors with Swiss Army knives are probably less effective than military who are trained, who can be deployed.

And, for example, at the present time in North Kivu, where we have, in the past, had 22 separate armed groups, and which mercifully are now in the process of disarming, in fact have been largely disarmed, not without problems either, but there are about 40 military, temporary operating bases of the blue helmets, of MONUC. About half of them are placed in areas at the specific request of the humanitarians. In terms of trying to deal with the byproducts of the conflict, the humanitarians, looking at where the IDPs are and where the population is at risk, say this is a must protect place, this is a should protect place, this is a could protect place. And when it's must protect, the military deploy a temporary operating base to that area to make sure that the small group of 50, 60 blue helmets are present to ward off the kind of attacks that take place.

You see the IDPs basically cluster around them like filings around a magnet in that area. It's not a lot, but it's amazing what a few people can do. When you have the militia and indeed elements of the national army going after civilians, obviously, for reasons of their own in terms of economic reasons, having even a small group of people, of UN Peacekeepers who know how to use their guns and, therefore, see off these people, do discourage the attacks and save thousands of lives.

We've also tried to expand this through putting out, as John mentioned, joint protection teams, which are civilian groups, to try and link, to try and interact with the local community, to help the local community see what they can do to protect themselves, what they can expect the UN military to do, and so on.

But it's also part of a broader approach that we're endeavoring, a stabilization strategy for the East where we're seeking to get the military out of the populated areas and into garrisons, and with the support of a number of donors, this is being possible, and getting police into keeping law and order. Keeping law and order is not a military function. It's certainly not a military function even of the UN military. And, therefore, getting these people out who unfortunately, the national military who are, unfortunately, often involved, all too often involved in exactions rather than protecting the population, away from the population, is one of the things we've been working on.

In relation to the current operation where the humanitarian cost is unacceptably high, efforts that are being made by the MONUC military to contain these actions, do include providing food to the soldiers who are fighting in Kimia 2. Why? Because we believe they should be strong and hearty and able to fight? No. It's because, in fact, if they don't get food, they will then go after the civilian population, so it's a protection of civilian measure, which has not been done elsewhere, and not one that we're keen to do everywhere, but it's an attempt to try and avoid that the population is targeted, suborned in this way.

As John mentioned, we have been – one thing, if I may touch on as well, is the humanitarian operation in the East has been at no small cost to the humanitarians. We have already surpassed 118 attacks on humanitarians this year in North Kivu alone. The year is not yet over. Mercifully, not too many of them have been fatal, but they have been very gory in various cases, and this covers the range of, obviously, nongovernmental partners, particularly national nongovernmental partners, as well as international UN agencies and others.

We have endeavored, in the course of the last while to do what is euphuistically called humanitarian reform. We have been a little bit of a guinea pig for some of the different approaches, not because we were slavishly following a prototype, but indeed, the belief that there are better ways of doing things and we should try them and be, perhaps, willing to find that they don't work. But one of the things we have tried to do is, with the Humanitarian Action Plan, to expand it so that it does cover the whole country. We've gone into the clusters in a fairly substantial way, particularly in the provincial and regional level.

Congo is, as I've tried to point out, is an enormous country and, therefore, it's imperative that the needs of the particular areas be reflected in real time. And on that basis we have actually provincialized the cluster approach and with the help of a pooled fund that last year had 185 million in it from donor sources and the CERF, has been able to address needs in real time and in terms of coherent strategies for dealing with the kind of problems.

We, in addition, in relation to that, have tried to make sure that the kind of interface that is now possible with the stabilization strategy that has been initiated in the east with the UN, now in the conjunction of a much broader donor approach, and government approach I should say, that we can see where on the one hand the humanitarian action plan is not part, is not integrated into this political military strategy, but on the other hand, the benefits that the humanitarian program can bring, such as we've seen, do provide a base for moving ahead and solving some of these intractable problems.

Those of us in the humanitarian business want to be out of it. That we have been able to earn the support of the donor community for humanitarians is something that I am immensely grateful for. Over the last five years the amount contributed has gone up fivefold in Congo, up to nearly 600 million a year now. But it would be so much better if we weren't having to spend this kind of money on saving lives and making sure that people were, children were not stunted and that the systems could be put in place so they'll be self-sustaining in the country and that Congo is much further on the way down the track to looking after its own problems. And indeed, converting the immense wealth of the country, the immense wealth of the country into the benefits for the population.

It will need – Congo has made progress. It is moving ahead. It is fragile. It is not irreversible. One cannot build a new society on dead bodies. Humanitarian assistance will continue to be required, and the international community, I'm afraid, is going to need to be with this country, supporting the population of this country, for some time soon. The country deserves it. Thanks.

Hoge: Thank you Ross. That indeed was a valedictory address. I'd like to turn it over for questions. We have 30 minutes and if you raise your hand, there's a gentleman – wait for the microphone please, and introduce yourself.

Henri Boshoff Thank you very much. Henri Boshoff from the Institute for Security Studies in South Africa. Firstly, I want to thank also Mr. Mountain. I think spending five years in Congo and coming out and still being optimistic is something to be applauded.

Secondly, I want to congratulate Mr. Holmes for making a statement, something that the UN DPKO has been denying the last few days, about MONUC failing to protect civilians. And I want to clarify it, why keep on denying it that since October last year, with the starting of the campaign by Nkunda and the FRDC, that basically erupted until they reached Goma, why did MONUC not use this mandate? It has got a Chapter Seven mandate, it's got capability, it's got a robust force in attack helicopters. And we've seen in the past, in 2005, 2006, the eastern part of the DRC under the Eastern Division, was the most stable place in Congo, the most stable place. How could it let it go and become what it is now today?

Then, everybody was talking about the stability program, the DDR. I think one thing that's very important is that it's about governance, and that we have to start looking in Kinshasa. Unfortunately, at this stage, the governance is only as far as the outskirts of Kinshasa. Mr. Kabila does not rule further than the outskirts of Kinshasa. That's, unfortunately, the reality. How are you going to change that?

Then the other issue is the speculation about changing the constitution. We've had an election, and then the message was given to the South African government, by 2011 South Africa can withdraw its troops, they won't be needing it anymore. So, how do you interpret that type of talk?

Then the issue of Kimia II to continue to stop it – my question would be, isn't there maybe another option? And Mr. Mountain raised the issue of containing the FRDC. And I think that is the best option, completing the DDR and completely containing them and putting them, the police in place. The question would be, maybe ask what about the FDLR? Well, get an outside force to go on FDLR. But the issue of FDLR is not a military issue, it's a political solution. We are playing a military solution on a political solution.

Then also I think what is very important – I'll finish – the whole issue of completing DDR and if – the completion of the DDR and how to start the stability plan is going to coincide with that. Thank you.

Hoge: Ross, could I ask you maybe to take some of those questions and then John, I think one was directed at you.

Mountain: Okay. Any particular one you would like me to take? No, thank you very much for, obviously, very insightful questions. I think perhaps to deal with the governance issue, we have said that elections are necessary but not sufficient condition for stability. One has to go through that. The elections were not only national elections, they were provincial elections, and it has – when you have elected politicians in any country, one discovers that they would actually like to be reelected, and that has actually had a fairly interesting effect in terms of even provincial, central relationships where the provinces are now much more concerned about what they can deliver for their population.

While the – you're right in implying that the administrative structure is extremely weak in the country, and that's something that needs to be done – and I did try and touch in my remarks on the fact that this was not a regional issue, it's not the East and the West, it's a fragile state, in the current lexicon.

We do need to move ahead. I happened to be a strong proponent of moving ahead with the local elections as well, to try and root the process in the communities, and indeed, if I may, get more women elected than was possible the last time around.

So, yeah, you have to work on this. We're in a country where practically everything is broken and you've got to work out which bits you tackle, when, and how. And you can't do everything at the same time.

The point that John made earlier about Kimia II is that MONUC, while it may be advertised as the largest UN peacekeeping force in existence at the present time, only has 17-, soon 20,000 troops for a land mass the size of, if you take the whole country, of 2.4 million square kilometers. NATO put over 40,000 troops into Kosovo, of 10,000 square kilometers. Now I'm not sure what that says about the different troops, but I do think that it needs to be borne in mind. And quite clearly, what we're trying to do is, with the assets we have, is to use them as imaginatively as we can to protect civilians, and that's been the enormous challenge.

Will that stop all the exactions of the FARDC, for example? No. Will that reduce some of their exactions and save lives? I believe so, and that's what we've been trying to do.

I'll leave some of the others to others, if I may.

Holmes: Well let me try to add a little bit to what Ross was saying there. I mean did – why did MONUC, in your words, not use its robust peacekeeping mandate? I think you were talking about around Goma last year when the CNDP was attacking. I mean I think in fact, to a large extent they did, at least, by making clear that Goma would not be allowed to fall. That made a big difference and eventually that situation was resolved.

I think you need to bear in mind also that running a peacekeeping mission in a place like DRC is a very complicated issue, for some of the reasons that Ross gave, but also because the troop-contributing countries have their views, and you're not entirely free to do with those troops always exactly what you might like to do if you were a military commander of a national force, and that's simply a fact of life.

On the question, again, of Kimia 2, I mean could some outside force do it? I don't think MONUC can get involved in simply taking that kind of action itself. I don't think it has that mandate really, and I don't think, again, the troop contributors would not allow it to do that.

It's very hard to argue that some outside force should simply be allowed to come in and do it. I mean the government of DRC, it's their country, they're sovereign there, they need to be operating there with their own forces, however, whatever difficulties they may face, which is one of the difficulties of whether Rwandan forces are allowed in or not allowed in from time to time. So there are real sovereignty issues there, which I think make the kind of solution you're putting forward very difficult to envisage in practice.

I agree that – and I don't think anybody would argue – that the solution is not military alone. There are lots of political issues about where all the rest of the FDLR are going to go, the FDLR leaders who are in Europe or wherever they are, tackling the issue that way – that is certainly on the agenda and being pursued actively.

But without some kind of military pressure on the FDLR, I think their exactions would certainly be continuing and probably getting worse, and I'm afraid they have been responsible, certainly for some of the worst of the sexual violence that we've seen in the past there. Certainly that was the case when I went to the Panzi Hospital in Bukavu. Most of the victims I spoke to fingered the FDLR as the main perpetrators.

On the question of governance, obviously everybody recognizes that's a huge issue. The state needs to be there. The state needs to be present. It needs to have its police force. But there's such a lot to do there. I think I'm right in saying I don't think this is just an urban myth – the budget of the DRC government, for this country the size of western Europe with 60 million people, is \$2 billion a year. I mean you can imagine, even in DRC, how far that goes. So there are some huge problems there which we cannot simply expect the government to address until it gets a much better control over its own natural resources, gets a proper share of that wealth, which it can then use for the benefit of its own citizens. Then you might see real governance changes and a situation where it would be much easier to envisage the police, the justice system being there and, therefore, no need for a force like MONUC.

Hoge: Thank you. John, did you want to ask a question? John Hirsch?

John Hirsch: I'm John Hirsch. I'm the Director of the Occidental College at the UN Programme, as well as IPI. A number of my wonderful students are here right now, and I appreciate your presentations for everybody here.

One of the topics we've discussed in the course is how much all the efforts of the UN are integrated, and I think you've actually spoken to that with the work of UNICEF and OCHA and the field, but I'm wondering if you can also say something more – I know this session is on the humanitarian aspect of this crisis – about whether you see the UN presence there as, in effect, indefinitely open ended, whether you see a political solution somewhere down the line.

You referred to the nine countries that had been at war, at least eight or nine years ago, or they're still nine at war, or is this now really an internal, you know, inside the DRC problem? You referred to the stabilization strategy. You referred to the DRC looking after its own problems. I wonder if any or all of you could illuminate a little more what you foresee as the ability to really bring this conflict to something approaching closure, or whether you really see this as, unfortunately, a very open-ended process? Thank you.

Mountain: Thank you indeed. I think that – I don't wish to sound Pollyanna-ish here, but I do think that there is at least sufficient forward movement for optimism on that. And I do believe that what happened at the beginning of this year when President Kabila and President Kagame, the presidents of DRC and Rwanda, came together out of an understanding of their separate but joint necessity, something which, if I may say so, we believe was certainly, on one side, provoked by a very strong UN panel report on, shall we say, financial transactions across the border, which brought certain pressure on one side and the military loss on the other.

Anyway, that agreement, which rolled up the CNDP, notwithstanding its problems and has, in fact, been at the basis of the FDLR campaign, has pacified regional relationships – certainly with Rwanda, similarly something that was done in Uganda, with the Ugandans in Haut-Uele – have meant that I think you have a real prospect for regional peace.

So right now the problems are essentially within the DRC, between DRC and the neighborhood and, you know, nothing in life is perfect and it remains to be seen how this is going to play out, but it is now dealing with militias that are in the process of disarming, the 22 militias I address – not perfectly yet, and so on.

But I do want to say, though that – first of all, the UN will not leave. The UN was there before MONUC and will be there after MONUC and the UNDPs and the UNICEFs and the WFPs and so on, but will be, hopefully, focused much more on development.

Two, I think we're discovering, I think if there's anything we've discovered recently, that's perhaps why integrated missions are interesting, is that you do not settle problems such as the DCR simply by force of arms and political wit. You actually have to strengthen the capacity of the government itself to be able to control it, its territory, and be able to deal and support and provide for its population, and you have to help people get back into economic life in their own community and having a stake in the future.

So that's an aspect that must be addressed, in my view, as well as focusing on the – and that's why, for example, we are, in Congo, emphasizing the importance of not abandoning the West when there is so much to be done in terms of governance and putting in government structures, which is necessary as a base for the development of humanitarian agencies to be able to address that, to mention. This is an extremely important part.

The UN, I think, has in the past prematurely left countries. And we have seen the examples of when they've had to come back again. It's expensive in terms of money. It's even more expensive in terms of human lives when you leave prematurely and have to come back. I think it's early on. Maybe with Liberia, maybe with Burundi we've learned a few lessons there. I hope that might be applied to a rather larger country with rather larger stakes like Congo.

Hoge: That's a thorough and definitive answer. I have a woman here on the outside aisle.

Kristina Koch-Avan: I'm Kristina Koch-Avan from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. First of all, I just really wanted to thank Ross because he's really one of a handful of great deputy SRSGs that we have out there and indeed, it has been your job and you have been highly effective at linking a very, very important humanitarian and development operation with a highly complex peacekeeping operation, and in that regard it's going to be hard to replace you, but I'm sure there are many who have been inspired by your work.

I wanted to say also thank you for the innovation of the joint protection teams coming out of MONUC and the work of the UN agencies in DRC. And I wondered if you could say a little bit more about how they have been effective, both in building trust between, in particular, the military arm of MONUC and aid workers, as well as, perhaps if you could say a few words about whether or not you think this model could be scaled up and/or used elsewhere?

Mountain: Thanks Kristina. I think it's important, when we were trying to see how we can work with peacekeepers in protecting civilians, which is after all the number one MONUC mandate, to realize that no military, be it the New Zealand military, the American military or the European military is trained to protect civilians. They're trained for something else.

And so to actually get our military to start seeing what they should do in this regard has been extremely – has required the leadership of the military to face that, and we have been extremely blessed by General Babacar Gaye, in that respect. But it is, he has been able to get across also to brigade commanders from a wide diversity of countries, and particularly India and Pakistan, who have taken this on in a very serious way.

I talked about the mobile operating bases. That's really been quite important. We've actually produced a manual, or at least a little guide for when officers, commanders, are all of the sudden faced with raped women or faced with displaced groups seeking protection and so on, to try and help in that process.

The JPTs have been about recognizing the reality that most of our troops do not speak French or Swahili, in the east and, therefore, their means of communication with the population are quite limited. They have the best will in the world. So we've got small civilian teams, essentially from the mission, from civil affairs and human rights, who work with them, vis-à-vis the villages, and try and get an understanding both ways of what can be done, what the needs are, where they should run in the case of emergencies.

And we have actually been able to do advance evacuations to avoid people being hit in communities. And this is being expanded. We're trying to see if we can, in fact, make this on a more permanent basis with liaison with those communities.

This is not rocket science. It's just simply looking at the problems and seeing how you find solutions, and seeing how you can get the [MAJOR?] benefit from the limited resources we have, and that's been essentially what we've been endeavoring to do with the JPTs [Joint Protection Teams] and the protection aspect in general, thanks.

Hoge: I have a question in the back.

Matthew Lee: For Mr. Holmes, with all – no disrespect to Mr. Mountain, but we had ...

Hoge: Introduce yourself, Matthew.

Lee: Matthew Lee, Inner City Press. I wanted to ask about something at the cusp of humanitarian and protection of civilians. There was this incident in which Médecins Sans Frontières says that they were doing a vaccination, October 17th in Masisi, in an FDLR-controlled area, and that the army approached and shot at, killed civilians, chased them into the bush. It's a pretty – MSF is a pretty respected group, and they've said it without any equivocation. So I was wondering, it doesn't seem that yet MONUC has actually taken any action in terms of the particular brigade or unit that MSF said did this.



So I'm wondering, how is the – with the idea that MONUC is supposed to stop working with units that commit atrocities, how fast should that be? And what's the role for OCHA, for example, to speak to MSF and then pass that word on? There's the same – Philip Alston, who is a special rapporteur, did a report naming particular units – Captain Zimulinda – saying he killed 50 civilians, and they still continue to work with MONUC.

So I just wonder if you're – if either Mr. Homes or Ms. Veneman, if you're comfortable with the speed with which MONUC deals with allegations by special rapporteurs or MSF, and how that could be done better.

Holmes: Ross may also wish to comment because he's just come from there. This is part of the dilemma, obviously, of what we're trying to deal with, of how we react to these accusations. And I certainly saw the allegations that came from MSF, and as you say, they're a very respectable organization. I've no reason to disbelieve what they said. But I don't know enough about what then happened to actually comment on your particular point.

On the general point, that is what we're struggling with – how you deal with particular problems that arise from particular units. I mean you've seen that it was announced, I think it was last week or was it the week before, when Alain Le Roy was in, last week, was in DRC, that he announced very quickly that a unit which had been accused of killing civilians in a particular area, MONUC immediately said it was going to withdraw its cooperation from that unit and would stop working there in support of that unit.

So, you know, that's a demonstration that this mechanism is not just fiction, it's real. That's not the end of the story. We need to look at these things as and when they arise. But again, we have to balance the headline effect you might be able to get with the real protection of civilians you're trying to give. And if, say – as I said at the beginning – MONUC withdrawing support from a unit does not mean that unit stops operating. It simply continues to operate in whatever it's doing and the exactions it may be making on the civilian population without any restraining influence on it.

So I mean that's the really horrific dilemma, in a way, that MONUC faces and why they are so often damned if they do and damned if they don't, and that's why it's so difficult. It's very easy to criticize, it's very hard to get it absolutely right, but they are working their very hardest to do that.

Hoge: Thank you. I'm going to take two questions now, in the interest of time, first Pim Valdre and then afterwards, here in the front row.

Pim Valdre: Thanks. Pim Valdre from the International Peace Institute. I'd like to address this to you, Ross Mountain. One of the key outcomes from the recent debate on resolution 1820 was the decision to establish a special SRSG post for sexual violence in armed conflict. My question is, number one, would that be helpful in the case of MONUC? And number two, how would such a thematic mandate be coordinated with the field-specific SRSG in each specific country? Thanks.

Mountain: Let me just comment on the issue of sexual violence in the DRC, which is an affront, I think, to all, obviously to the country involved, but the concern that we have had for a long time in terms of how to deal with this, and it's been our belief that with the extraordinarily useful efforts done by agencies like UNICEF, like nongovernmental organizations in trying to deal with the consequences of sexual violence, that first of all, it must be stopped. And for it to be stopped, the whole tradition, if that be the word, of impunity of those who commit these atrocious acts, of which rape is often the least bad, has to be put in place.

Now we were enjoined by the Security Council to put together a comprehensive strategy, which we have indeed done, and the number one aspect of this is dealing with the impunity. But what has been most important is to get the government to come out on this issue, the leadership of the country. It will not be the international community that will solve this problem. It's only when the government takes leadership and starts prosecuting people, men essentially, because it's a fact – if there are no consequences, why should they stop, basically?

Fortunately, this zero tolerance policy that's recently been announced by the president, we regard that as belated, but at least it's out there now, and it is a step in the right direction. And this is beginning – beginning – beginning to have some resonance at the local level. So I do want to underline the importance of that and there's a lot been going into that.

Now, in terms of – I'm aware – I sketch this out, because I think the genesis of this particular post has been from the DRC consequence and situation. And clearly the DRC is not the only country. The Balkans featured rape as a weapon of war, and indeed the Security Council has addressed that.

This would obviously be, particularly, an advocacy position, and could well benefit. Getting a focus on these kinds of issues, we do – I do need to note that in order to get the kind of national leadership at senior level, not – obviously there are many Congolese authorities, women's groups, civil society have been extremely outspoken about this over time, but the international concern that was repeatedly expressed by leaderships, including of course, John and his predecessor, the Secretary General, and others, and Ann, indeed, who particularly focused on that when she was in the East, has contributed to finally getting this leadership going.

So if there's a shortcut to that and if this post provides a shortcut, that would be very welcome.

Hoge: And this will be the last question – from the front row?

Fabian Dubuet: I'm Fabian Dubuet, the UN Representative for MSF. I just wanted to also question, but I feel I have to just briefly address the issue that was raised by one of the participants, just to say that the reason why we issued a strong public statement about what happened three weeks ago during the vaccination campaign is because we – for the first time since, I think, the '90s, in this area, we had the feeling that our presence was used to kill people and that's totally unacceptable.

As you can imagine, we hope that our presence has a protective value. And I think for the first time since the '90s we had the – the analysis we made is that we were used to attract populations and to kill them. So, as you can imagine, that's a very serious issue. There was a press statement. There is also a follow up which is done with the Congolese army. As you can imagine, there were contacts with OCHA here and at the field level.

My question, very briefly, is about the protection of civilians. As you know, MSF has developed a very careful approach because of past tragedies, and because we realize that, in fact, the protection of civilians didn't mean anything for the militaries. I think we're very happy today to realize that there is a recognition, that there is a need for guidance and a clarification of policies and guidance – that's really a welcome diagnosis.

But still, I mean the question is, even if you clarified the policies and the guidance, the use of force in the end, within the UN peacekeeping operations, responds to a political equation. And my question is, do you think that the protection of civilians can be part of this political equation? I mean, all this said, do you think the protection of civilians is actually a political objective per se? Thank you.

Mountain: I obviously understand the basis and the framework of the question. Of course MSF has done remarkable work in the Congo and elsewhere.

I think that what we've had to come to grips with is we were confronted by the fact that men in uniform were going after civilian populations for economic and sexual violence reasons. And the deployment of a small number of UN peacekeepers could stop these people doing their – stop them harming the population.

So, we felt, and I firmly believe, that if our business is protecting civilians – when you're talking physical protection, then if you do have a UN force, which certainly was neutral between these parties at the time – when you have an elected government that gets a little more tricky, I agree – but when it's a question of protecting populations, then there's a very real role for UN peacekeepers to do what we've, in fact, got them to do.

The evidence on the ground, of course, has been that people have been scared of their own military and have preferred to group, particularly the IDPs, around bases, as your colleagues know.

I appreciate there are complications. The whole issue of escorts is one that there are differences of views on, and MSF doesn't take escorts. Unfortunately, some of them have been – you've, unfortunately, been hit in the 118, that's unfortunately – that I've mentioned for North Kivu, includes a number of MSF cases.

I see that we have tried to make available MONUC peacekeepers to provide protection for humanitarians when they want it. It certainly is not obligatory, as you know, and – but all I ask when that is done, when people say we do not want escorts, is they take responsibility for their own security at that stage which, I guess, is the minimum.

But it's, on balance, if you will, there was a little bit for us about do we protect our kind of ideological purity about mixing with people in uniform, or do we protect civilians? And I sort of came down on the latter.

Holmes: Just, perhaps, to say a couple of things. I mean protection of civilians is a political objective in itself. In a sense, as we were saying earlier this week, it's at the heart of the UN Charter, and now it's at the heart of the mandate of a lot of UN peacekeeping operations.

The problem is that saying that doesn't make it so. That doesn't protect civilians. I mean it's better than not having it there but, you know, translating that into action is a very difficult, complicated task, and we're only at the beginning of it really. We've made some progress and MONUC, you know, for its failings and faults, whatever you want to say, has been at the forefront of that as well.

But there's a lot of complicated things will go into making it happen more systematically than it does now, but even when they've done that, you know, we have to keep our expectations in the right place. We're not going to protect all civilians in all places like eastern DRC, and very, very far from it.

So if the benchmark of the success of a peacekeeping operation is did they protect all civilians, all peacekeeping operations are going to fail, and you won't have any peacekeeping operations, actually, on that basis, and then civilians will be worse off. That's the sort of bottom line as I would see it.

The other point is, and it's also related to sexual violence, if we don't tackle the underlying problems of conflict in that area, then civilians will not be protected, sexual violence will not stop, because until those underlying causes of conflict, until that conflict stops, there is now way of stopping it, even if you had more judges and better courts and police forces and all the rest of it while that conflict is going on, while those illegal armed groups are there, these problems will continue.

So that's why, you know, whatever the problems surrounding operations like Kimia II and all the rest of it, that is part of a package which is trying to tackle these underlying problems, and you've got to keep that in mind when you're criticizing the consequences or the side effects of these things at the same time.

Hoge:

Since I am no longer a journalist, I can reveal my sources of critical information, and I can tell you that about ten minutes ago, Ann Veneman, and I want to thank her for this, passed me a piece of paper that said 'not only is today Ross Mountain's last day at the United Nations, it also is his birthday.' So happy birthday, and thank you Ross, and Ann and John Holmes.