



## **IPI High-Level Policy Forum**

### **JOINING FORCES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

**Featuring: Ms. Margot Wallström, *Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict***  
**and**  
**Dr. Denis Mukwege, *Director of Panzi Hospital, DRC***

*Welcome remarks will be given by H.E. Mr. Jan Grauls,  
Permanent Representative of Belgium*

**When:**  
**June 29, 2011, 8:15-9:30am**

**Where:**  
**Trygve Lie Center for Peace, Security & Development**  
**International Peace Institute**  
**777 United Nations Plaza, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor**  
**(Corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 44<sup>th</sup> Street)**

**Agenda:**  
**8:15-8:30am Breakfast**  
**8:30-9:30am Presentations and Discussion**

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## **TRANSCRIPT**

**Warren Hoge:**

I'm Warren Hoge, IPI's vice president for external relations, and I'm pleased on behalf of IPI, the King Baudouin Foundation, and the Permanent Mission of Belgium to the United Nations to welcome you to the policy forum on joining forces in the fight against sexual violence.

Our discussion will focus on the effort to combat sexual violence in conflict, mainly affecting women and girls. And we have two eminent people to guide us, Margot Wallström, the special representative of the secretary general, on sexual violence in conflict, and Dr. Denis Mukwege, director of the Panzi Hospital in Buchavu, the capital of South Kivu province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A third eminent

person, Jan Grauls, the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, will introduce them in a moment, but let me take a minute or two to talk about IPI and the DRC, the country where Dr. Mukwege was born and where he now does such courageous work to combat the extraordinary levels of sexual violence visited on its women. We were all alarmed by the stark numbers in an American Journal of Public Health report published in May that noted that as many as 1.8 million Congolese women have been raped, with some 434,000 raped in the one year period preceding the study. That amount—shockingly-- is almost a rape a minute. And just this past Friday the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said that up to 170 women had been gang-raped by gunmen on June 11 in two south Kivu villages.

The DRC is the 12th largest country in the world, a country the size of Western Europe, and home to 60 million people. And it's suffered a brutal war over the past 16 years that has cost the lives of more than 5 million people. Horribly, it is a war in which sexual violence has become a tactic of war, and one disturbing conclusion you can draw from that is that the battleground for the Congo's war is often women's bodies.

That war as complex as it is violent, has involved at least 20 different rebel groups and armies from nine other African countries with no clear national objectives at stake. As a result, the DRC hasn't gotten as much media attention as other crises, but thanks to the work of Dr. Mukwege, the dilemma facing women there is attracting worldwide concern.

Dr. Mukwege, may I say I am delighted to welcome you back to IPI where we remember well your appearance here in February 2009. The DRC currently has the largest United Nations peacekeeping force of any country in the world, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission known as MONUSCO. It is 19,000 members, and incidentally, its mandate was renewed yesterday for a year by the Security Council.

Since MONUSCO is charged with the protection of civilians from armed attacks, rape and other forms of sexual violence, the persistence of this abuse represents a critical challenge for the UN's efforts to try to bring a measure of peace and stability to the country. IPI's Africa program and our partners have tried to keep our focus on your country. And we will continue to as you prepare for parliamentary elections there in late November.

In April we gathered together members of the DRC government, representatives of civil society organizations in the DRC, and experts from the UN, the African Union, the World Bank, and the International NGO community to help plot the way forward for MONUSCO. We also published an issue brief coauthored by my colleague, IPI's senior analyst, Arthur Boutellis, on MONUSCO's role after the elections, and last month we featured a presentation here by Jason K. Stearns, author of a widely admired book on the DRC called *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters, the Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa*. Earlier this month we presented Roger Meece, special representative of the secretary-general for the DRC and the head of MONUSCO. So we are keen to keep this critical conversation going and pleased that the Belgian Mission and the King Baudouin Foundation asked us to co-host this event this morning. I'm now pleased to turn this over to Ambassador

Jan Grauls for welcoming comments of his own and an introduction of our two distinguished speakers.

**Jan Grauls:**

Thank you for these opening remarks and thank you also for allowing me to introduce our two guest speakers to this esteemed audience this morning. So colleagues, ladies and gentleman, dear friends, Dr. Denis Mukwege is a very special person. He's the founder and director of the Panzi Hospital established in 1999 in Bukavu, the capital of the south Kivu province in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In this war-torn region, an estimated 5 million people have been killed over the past 16 years. Rape, torture and mutilation are rife there in a context where rebel forces attempt to institute a reign of terror and fear in order to seize control of mineral-rich areas. While its primary objective was to make healthcare available to the population of Bukavu on a nonprofit basis, it very soon became a reference center for the victims of sexual violence. At Panzi Hospital, Dr. Mukwege and his team helped those women regain the will to live.

The treatment of their physical and emotional injuries is coupled with a socio-economic rehabilitation process to combat the exclusion, which the victims face after those acts of violence. This approach helps the women to recover physically and mentally, pick up their lives and so regain a certain measure of dignity. Dr. Mukwege's work reaches beyond hospital treatment. He wants to put in place in Eastern Congo an integrated healthcare system that meets the terrible challenges of violence and chaos.

In addition, he has campaigned untiringly for the women in this region, denouncing the unbelievable acts of violence committed against them as soon as he was offered an international platform. This happened in 2008, when he received the Olof Palme Prize and the United Nations prize in the field of human rights. The remarkable activities of Dr. Mukwege have lost nothing of their relevance. He is unquestionably a symbol of resistance and hope, a campaigner for peace and development. Dr. Mukwege was recently awarded in fact last month in Brussels the prestigious King Baudouin Prize for International Development by the King Baudouin Foundation.

Ms. Wallström hardly needs any introduction here in New York and elsewhere. She has been a long time advocate of the rights of women, the rights and the needs of women, throughout her political career, first as Swedish minister and then later as Environment Commissioner and Vice President of the European Commission. She has been actively engaged in promoting the participation of women in peace and security issues and most notably the injustice and violence faced by women during armed conflict.

Our secretary-general Ban Ki Moon appointed her as his special representative on sexual violence in conflict last year, and she played a leadership role in raising awareness about the urgency to implement the different Security Council resolutions on this issue. Since being appointed as SRSG Ms. Wallström has already visited the DRC on three occasions, where she discussed the issue of sexual violence with the Congolese authorities, including with President Kabila.

Ms. Wallström received several honorary doctorates and awards for her work on sustainable development, climate change and has also done extensive work to endorse European Union Africa partnership and to champion equal opportunities. And let me add that since her appointment, the SRSG has developed an extraordinary activity both in New York and abroad visiting scenes where sexual violence has occurred, talking to victims, to governments, the NGOs, civil societies and including also perpetrators of sexual violence addressing the Security Council in an unusual and uncompromising way, never seen, never heard before. I think we should mention that also. Attending seminars and high level events always as a forceful advocate of the victims of sexual violence. And usually it's to say that Dr. Mukwege and Ms. Wallström have become strong allies and partners. Thank you very much.

**Margot Wallström:**

Excellencies, thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, for inviting me to this event. Thank you for being here this morning. Breakfast meetings are a bit challenging. I'm not really a morning person, but let's see if I'm awake. I will soon be, I'm sure. This whole issue on conflict-related sexual violence has been placed firmly on the Security Council's agenda over the last few years. And that is very important progress and a very important starting point.

It has been defined not as the inevitable consequence of war, but as a scourge that will affect our possibilities to achieve a sustainable peace and development, that women have an important role to play in both war and peace. That is already recognized by resolutions that date more than 10 years back, but the fact that sexual violence has been used as a weapon of war, that has increasingly guided also the prevention efforts and the policies that are being shaped in the Security Council and at the highest level.

I am very fortunate, because I have been able to step up on a platform already established by 13 UN entities called UN Action Against Sexual Violence, and that makes it easy for me, I don't have to start from the beginning to try to coordinate and harmonize what the whole UN system does, but they have already prepared and started a number of activities, important activities, and that helps a lot. So what we are trying to do, me and my small office, we are nine people on the budget, on the UN since the beginning of this year.

We also have a team of experts on the rule of law, a small team of five people who can be deployed to different countries and areas of concern where they'd look at the legislation to make sure that normative and legislative framework is also addressing these issues in a proper way. For example, they will return, I think, tomorrow, I hope tomorrow, from South Sudan, where the government asked us to help to look at their transitional constitution and how these issues are dealt with in that constitution.

So we are a small team and we, of course, will play the role of looking at what is going on in the whole UN system. Can we be more effective? For example, in how we train peacekeepers, so that they know what to do, what to expect and what to do when they are sent to an area like the South Kivu or the Kivus in Eastern DRC.

They have had to do that in a very ad hoc way until now, and what was done was we put together an inventory of best peacekeeping practices, because peacekeepers are often criticized for their failures and their shortcomings, but very rarely do we see the examples of the best practices, the best examples of what they can and should be doing. And that inventory of good peacekeeping practices, like, for example, in the DRC where they accompany women to the market, or they accompany them to fetch water.

This has increased the security in the whole area. Men will also start to follow. And then, of course, it helps the economic development if they can go safely with their produce to the market. Or in Darfur, where they'll use more fuel efficient stoves. So women don't have to go far away to get firewood. And now we are turning that into training modules so that we can in the predeployment training of peacekeepers that they can better understand the challenges and they can be better prepared for situations that are very often very difficult and challenging for them.

Often they cannot speak any of the local languages, so how do they engage with local community, how do they understand the needs of women? Because protection of civilians, which is these days a part of most of the missions, the peacekeeping missions, cannot be gender blind. Civilians is not without gender, and you have to understand what are the needs of women, children and men respectively.

So this is one of the tasks, but we also have made fighting impunity the main priority because what is not really looked at as a crime. I know that there was a survey or a questionnaire to soldiers in the DRC, the national army. So they asked them, "What do you think will be the consequences of rape? If you rape a woman, what will happen to you?"

And several of them did not even understand the question. "Why do you even ask? There are no consequences for that."

Others said, "Well, maybe a few days locked up, about three or five days at the most."

Others said, "Well, a goat, we pay a goat to the family and then that's the deal." And most of them did not realize that there were any consequences whatsoever of raping a woman.

And if this is the understanding of what rape really does to an individual and to a society, it will be very, very difficult to root this out. So fighting impunity to make sure that the perpetrators are found and put to justice is very, very important. And we are working actively on that. I can see and to be also positive because we often start with all the misery in the DRC, but let's say that we've seen a few signs of change, meaning that for the first time the Congolese government has also prosecuted high commanders of the FARC, the National Army, they have been put to jail. And that is very important, and a principal change of attitude that we hope will prevail.

And we have managed to actually follow up on impunity. We have also seen that the international criminal court and others are taking up sexual violence as an offense and these allegations following up on these allegations. So that's very important. But it will also have, and I will

finish with that, it will have to go hand in hand with empowering women, so we work, of course, with UN women and also with the other UN entities to make sure that everything we do aims at giving women a voice.

And I think as Dr. Mukwege said yesterday, we have to get inspired by these survivors of sexual violence and we have to remember them. And most of the time the only thing I can promise them is to bring their voices to the Security Council, to the highest level in the United Nations, to the international society, to the media, and repeat what they -- the stories that they tell me. And I think for me it's maybe this 17-year-old girl in Gama, she came with her father to Gama to one of these *salles d'écoute*, where they could share their story.

And it turned out that she wouldn't look anyone in the eyes any longer, but she was apparently the best student in that school but one day a jeep with a few soldiers had asked her if she could buy cigarettes for them and she didn't dare to refuse so she went to buy cigarettes and when she got back, they just captured her and took her to a building where they kept her for, I think, almost a week and repeatedly raped her.

And when she got back, of course, the light was out in her eyes. And her father was so desperate about this because he could see that she is the future of the Congo. And if this is being done to girls like her, to women, this will affect the future of that country. And I think she represents all of those that lost hope when this has been done to so many women, children but also boys and men these days. And I will try to keep her, the image of her alive in front of me, because it's for her that we also fight and continue to fight. Thank you.

**Warren Hoge:**

Thank you very much, Margot Wallström. Just on your last point about the future, what it does to that society--I was making some notes to myself yesterday and I have them here. I said one of the horrible things about this violence is it destroys a woman's reproductive organs and she can no longer have children in a society in which motherhood sometimes defines being a female. Anyhow, I'm going to call on Dr. Mukwege to speak now. Once again, he will speak in French, and on those devices the channel one will translate it into English. Dr. Mukwege.

**Dr. Denis Mukwege:**

Thank you, Mr. President for letting me speak. Your Excellence, ladies and gentlemen. So I'm happy to be here for the second time. I have to first of all express all my gratitude that you are here this morning to talk about this problem which is a crucial problem. I think that what I have observed in our situation is the progress that has been possible thanks to your efforts, thanks to everyone's efforts these last 10 years where this question has become a social or humanitarian one and one about security.

And I remember the first time that I talked to the Security Council. There was at that time a representative of a nation who said why do we have to argue about sexual questions in the Security Council? And effectively I believe that it is a reaction that one could have but the more we have people who get involved, who understand that it's not just part of war but has become a war tactic, and so it has become an issue with enormous consequences, and I think we're forced to get things moving in the right direction.

I wanted to take this time to thank everyone for all the work that has been done by Mme. Wallström with her team and I have to say that you have very much impressed us and made us realize that we do understand how difficult it is to fight this in a land where the government with the system in place that is trying to clear a path, and I have to say thank you to you and to your team and all of you because I know that your participation is making significant advances for the cause of these women who are sexual violence victims there.

When we try to see how to fight this, we can see from our side the area. We have the impression that enormous efforts on the international front, especially concerning the legal tools, the instruments that we now possess in terms of United Nations resolution, without counting all the international conventions with regard to protecting women's rights.

And I think that when we see all the tools that we have at our disposal et cetera, the statutes of Rome and the ICC, we need to find out what we can do against this problem that is growing. But we can also observe aside from these instruments that do this sexual violence, whether it's war crimes or crimes against humanity, we can see as well on the state level, for example in the Republic of the Congo, we have very good laws, we assimilate international conventions concerning the enforcement of the fight against sexual violence and laws that punish. When I say the Congolese laws, I find that they are among some of the best laws that you could find concerning the fight against sexual violence.

I would like to talk a little bit about the plan of the governments for putting a force in place that can help national and international organizations that are well- implemented and concerning human rights that constitute enforcement of nonnegotiable laws in the fight against violence against women, you need to remember that it's often difficult for the victims who could inform and oblige and it's the international forces that play a primordial role in the fight against sexual violence.

I think that when the worker and here we are really doing a lot of work on the base community level, in fact the basic community rules are often are rules that are disclosed by you regarding the women and so sometimes we have the community that cannot integrate when we talk about sexual violence, they had the impression that we have changed, in fact, the rule that has always existed and also the old grandfathers, why should it be different when we have won, why not have women fighting back? And I think it's a conception where, in fact, we need to choose to fight for the women.

Therefore the community who are of discriminatory beliefs that are fairly serious may be an important factor in the fight against sexual violence. So I think instead of the victim feeling held down by the community, once the victim is punished, she is also stigmatized by her own community, and we can see the horrible consequences of that.

The families are not negligible. Once a woman has been installed and accepted in a family, she just wants to fit in, but once she has been subjected to these reactions of the family who simply want to protect its honor by saying we can't keep you here, we lose something very

important, because the family normally plays the most important role in the healing process, the process of reestablishing the victim.

And we need to remember that since the victim doesn't have the capacity to be able to explain that she needs to feel supported, we can't understand these silences, so we don't treat them and there's a vicious cycle of rape, silence and impunity. And the only way to be able to get past through this vicious cycle is the support of the family that has to show the victim that you are a victim, we're behind you, we love you despite of what has happened, and we want to go with you in every way possible.

This is what will permit the victim, in fact, to be able to pull herself together and say I'm going to fight for myself, and one she fights she can stop this vicious cycle of rape, silence and impunity, and rape. And this is work that is done on our terms. Regarding the plan of the tools, let me say that we have plenty of tools that are very good legal tools. But what else can we observe?

We can observe, for example that the in the last 10 years there are many states that have put in place action plans, maneuvers, and that was stopped. There was no follow-through. One can observe, for example, concerning the laws of the international tribunal, it's the regulatory institution that goes after the criminals, but what do we observe for example on terrorism, this organization has weaknesses that have to absolutely be improved.

The instigator takes refuge in his country, gets away from the international penal code, which no longer has power over this person. We have even observed in fact that to stop a criminal where there is an arrest mandate, we absolutely need the corroboration of the state. The international penal code don't have any police so local police say no, we don't have to stop this person and that's where it stops.

Upon talking with women in Congo, and it really hurt me because it what she lives now all the time, she said you can't imagine how hard it is to see every day the person who raped you, who scares you, you know you can't stop him, and it's like he's mocking you. And it's like you're getting raped every day. And in Congo today the soldiers that are in the community guard near the victims, they're the same soldiers who raped them. They've just changed their form and now have become protectors.

And there are women who have come to see me who have said we want to end our lives because it's almost impossible to live in this nightmare. So you see a little we have very good tools but their replication causes a problem. The international law in fact in many countries there are not any distinctions between the independence of the magisterial, the justice that is governed by corruption and dysfunctionality of justice, and it's when we talk about a country, for example, like Congo, we have adopted resolutions of the United Nations and international laws in the constitution, but that's what is done with these doesn't reflect justice and in the end it's like the victims ask themselves why should I bother complaining.

I want to make a statement concerning the international organizations, we work very well with many organizations that do humanitarian efforts in

these territories, but what we observe is that the humanitarian organizations have rules, and sometimes they work during periods of time that are limited. And once these humanitarian organizations involve the knowledge of experts, once they leave the area or territory, there is no follow-up. Each humanitarian organization has no arm of development, if I can describe it that way, to be able to continue their actions.

Most of the actions that they can take, it's involved in conflict, and then we lose a lot. I will finish by saying that for families, in fact we need to really -- you who support these organizations that work on the fight against sexual violence against women, work as well also with the root communities because if we can't change the laws in these places, the social and cultural discrimination, the cultural discriminations, our work will be very difficult.

I will finish by saying that on the international plan I believe that a text or additional convention that would comprise the globality of the problem of sexual violence would not be -- in fact an unneeded convention, I think this convention should be on that will reinforce more or less the character of the national fight and hunt of the criminals of sexual violence. Whether that be -- I see a very good example in a neighboring country, the genocides as have been done to the human spirit, no one could think that genocide has been done, they will hide it and everyone tells themselves it's dangerous, it's serious.

And I think we need to understand that the criminals of sexual violence can no longer be hidden or think that they are in security. For that we need a restructuring of the laws and methods of the states, because it's when these things are hidden by the legal plans, we tend to say -- but I really think we need to create mixed tribunals that can be controlled by the government where the criminals can be judged, the war criminals.

Sometimes we have the impression that the resolutions of the United Nations are very good resolutions, that everyone should support, but there are not the constraints -- we have the idea that we really need to work by negotiation, and really what we need to do is have a system to punish the criminals. I am not a lawyer, I am a poor surgeon. I don't know if there is a way to be more stringent in the states, but I think there are materials and ways in which there should be more regulations and constraints as soon as we accept to be part of a community.

Regarding the states, I think that in regions of conflict often what directs and tries to win the war, the person, the judge is part of this. It gives really bad results, so what can we do? Can the international courts for example have more power, even when it's an attack that could win the war but in winning the war what they've done cannot stay unpunished. Because it's the law that applies to each area. Concerning the civil society, I think that really the responsible of the states that support these national organizations, to be able to sign on in a clear manner when we have urgent matters, to be able to continue, because that's the only way to give them the elements in order to be able to continue to fight in a permanent way against such crimes, in also trying to help the families escape the stigmatization and the social and cultural beliefs that destroy all the efforts that we try to make in our fight against sexual violence. Thank you.

**Warren Hoge:**

Thank you, Dr. Mukwege. We have 20 minutes and I want to hear from you in the audience. But Margo Wallström, could I just ask you first of all to comment, particularly on the latter part of Dr. Mukwege's comments when he talked about international conventions, tribunals, spoke specifically about the UN. I just wondered if that is something that's underway, if it's something that your office is in the position to support.

**Margot Wallström:**

I do believe that over the past few years we have a number of ambitious resolutions adopted by the Security Council. I think that that gives us enough for the moment to actually implement, start implementing also these resolutions. I am not so convinced today that we need that much of new resolution texts or even a convention. I think we do have the legal framework, the normative framework exists. But it is now for us to implement it, and I think also the problem is that what does not count risks being not counted, if you see what I mean.

So we are now, for example, mandated to put in place a monitoring and reporting mechanism in all the countries of concern so that we can actually get a better picture of what is going on and to have a better reporting and understanding of this phenomenon so that we can build also a better prevention. So maybe I will have to disagree a little on that. I don't believe that it is new conventions or even resolutions, but really now to start to implement it because it is only as good as its implementation, and we have a long way to go.

And that is notwithstanding that there might be gaps that we still have to identify and we also have to help the governments in those countries to be more effective in following up, because even in the DRC they have ambitious legislation, they have a *tolérance zéro*, they have a national plan, they have anti-rape legislation and all of that. But then the capacity, the training, the monitors, everything is missing in the capacity to follow up. And until recently they haven't had any prisons even to put the perpetrators in. So there are a lot of gaps or holes in this net if we want to do something about impunity.

Warren Hoge:

Thank you. Questions from the audience? William, if you please?

**William Verdonne:**

William Verdonne. I met both of you at the Czech Republic Consulate. We operate a women's college, and Ms. Wallström, you were talking about empowerment. And although the criteria is not necessarily violence, it is a free education. Beyond that, I wonder if you can touch upon, and I invoked your work, and resolution 1960 at yesterday's conference responsibility to protect as an emerging principle, I wonder if you can touch upon that particular resolution, which was the nature of the film, hence the Czech Republic event. Thank you.

**Margot Wallström:**

The latest resolution, that is the resolution 1960 from December last year, gives the Secretary General the mandate to first and foremost establish this monitoring and reporting mechanism everywhere so that we can have better facts and a better understanding of the phenomenon. Then it also says that we can do naming and shaming. That is listing perpetrators, like we have started to do with the five blacklisted from the Congo already, and it also says that we should try to get commitments from armed groups.

So it's also a mandate to engage with armed groups to ensure that we get from them commitments to, for example, implement codes of conduct or a better discipline, military discipline. And also a promise that the Security Council will use all the tools in its toolbox, including sanctions, being willing to use sanctions against perpetrators of sexual violence. So I think that we have now been handed those concrete tools and now we have to start to use them. So we have been invited also, me and my team, for example to the sanctions committee of the DRC to discuss would we add perpetrators to the list that they have in the sanctions committee and how do we do this so that we become effective?

So this was an important step forward, because until now this has been recognized as an international crime and by the international community when it comes to children but not women. So now they are saying we don't make a distinction between children and adults when it comes to this crime of sexual violence. We will treat them in the same way and we will use all the tools to bear on this.

**Warren Hoge:**

Thank you.

**Pim Valdre:**

Pim Valdre from IPI. Thank you for two very sobering presentations. From a broader perspective, what is the underrepresentation of women in peace processes, mediation, peace building process, what does this mean for fighting sexual violence in conflict? And secondly, women that report rapes face additional risks with actually reporting the crimes that they've been purposed to. How can the UN and how can the international community support women that actually report these crimes?

**Margot Wallström:**

Well, we know for example, figures from, I think, UN women that over the past, I'm just trying to find the proper correct figure, but over the let's say 20 years of all the more than 300 peace agreements adopted, only 18 even mention sexual violence. And of course, we know that it has been present in so many more of these wars and conflicts.

So first of all you have to recognize it, you have to bring it into the open. It has to be part of any peace discussions. And I think what we see in Liberia is what happens if it is not sort of treated properly because in Liberia rape is still the number one reported crime. This is a huge problem, and what was a way -- war has become a way of life. Many of these ex-child soldiers have been forced to do the most horrific crimes. They have been forced to maybe rape their mothers or their sisters in front of the family, sometimes kill them afterwards, and they are now young men who are supposed to live in a peaceful society and function as everybody else.

With almost no psychosocial counseling, with not even one psychiatrist in the whole of the country, how can we expect a society to start to live again in a peaceful way? And also with all the family norms and values being completely destroyed, the challenge is so enormous. And I think that this is consistently underestimated in any peace process. How do we help to rebuild? And we've discussed this a lot yesterday, Dr. Mukwege and myself also.

How can we help in establishing and finding methods to do therapy, to do this kind of psychosocial counseling, and where do we find the resources or the methods to do it on a much larger scale. So I think it has been almost invisible until now, and it also means that women still in Bosnia, it's the same thing. They meet their aggressor, they meet him in the bank and in the village where they live, the same guy that captured the young daughter and the mother and kept them in one of these rape camps.

And of course, they relive their trauma every day and 17 years after that peace agreement, these women tremble when they talk about it, and maybe 30 convictions or 30 prosecutions in total and 50,000 women being raped. It could be as high as 50,000 women. So where is justice there, and what does that create in terms of the dynamics in a society and women's understanding of their lives and their possibilities and also their representation? They're under-represented politically, which is a huge problem. You cannot just put new paint in the sports center where women were raped and think that you'll go on with life.

**Warren Hoge:**

We'll do three at once. Here, there, there. So start with Kate, please.

**Kate Hunt:**

Thank you, I'm Kate Hunt, CARE International, and I want to thank all of you for coming and addressing us. To pick up on what Margot has just said about the long-term impact that she so vividly described in Bosnia and in Liberia. I'd like to direct a question to Dr. Mukwege, because you've devoted a lot of your presentation to the cultural basis in the society in the Eastern Congo, and I wonder if you could give us some thoughts that you've had over the years for how development agencies who worked before the conflict and tried to work after the conflict in the peace building and the aftermath to rebuild communities, as well as norms. What can be done? And what would work best in a place like Congo? We realize this carries a big price tag for donors, but the long-term engagement with communities is something that you seem to find really important, so what could be done literally?

**Warren Hoge:**

Could you answer that question?

**Dr. Denis Mukwege:**

Thank you. I think that today the big problem that we can see with the organizations that work on the ground that I was talking about is the continuity of the action. That's the first thing, meaning it's not always in fact the same philosophy, the atrocities that are being committed, after they happen, there is a loss of train of action, sustaining the follow-through. That's the first thing and I think that's very important. I think in spite of our efforts, we need to work so that all the crimes are investigated, inventoried, classified, so that in fact we don't lose the line of action, of effect. That's the first thing.

In Congo we need to work on the coordination of actions. Each one comes with its program, with its indicators, with its money, and they try to take action without taking into account what exists, what others have already done there and to build on that. And I think that it's that absence of coordination that makes them lose much in terms of results, especially when we work with, for example, the community, it is very important that there is a coordination of these actions.

But in fact in the fight against sexual violence, in Congo they're trying to take things in order and do what they can with good intentions. I think there are good intentions, we see the misery and the suffering, we want to relieve that and take action, and sometimes we go in the opposite sense of what we really should be doing. What I mean by that is instead of continuing to destroy a system that maintains these discriminations; in fact we're going on a base that's not correct.

**Warren Hoge:**

Yes, please.

**Sarah Taylor:**

Thank you, Sara Taylor from the NGO Working Group on UN Peace and Security. Thank you both so much to the two panelists. We've talked a lot about the issues of impunity and trying to establish regimes of accountability. We've talked a little bit about rebuilding communities and the need for coherence there. What I'd really like to hear from Dr. Mukwege, thank you so much for your words, is to hear a little bit for us here in New York, those of us doing policy advocacy and those policy makers about some of the preventative work that needs to be done.

And I'm thinking specifically about the relatively near future with the elections that are coming up and our knowledge from other situations that those are often times of extreme danger for women. And also about some of the steps that the international community should be taking, has attempted to take in the past, around issues of promoting vetting standards, conventionality of aid. I'm just wondering if there's some messages that you'd like to bring to us here regarding those preventative measures. Thank you.

**Dr. Denis Mukwege:**

Thank you for the question. I will try, perhaps, to explain. I believe that in the Republic of Congo, the big situation, the greatest problem that we are seeing is concerning not the problem of impunity, but it's perhaps we have started on the wrong base, if I could say. Because we have started out on a basis to construct peace on fighting injustice and impunity and so we have completely sacrificed justice to build the country.

And in fact in these actions here, everyone knows that those in power, those who at all levels in the army, we know more or less who did what, who is responsible for which acts. But the fact that after the national conference, we said -- we put everyone together and we try to really mix the cabbage and the goats. So we try to put things together.

What is the result? It gives a mixture that today we have neither a country nor justice, and that's a little bit lamentable because it's a model that shows all its limits of functioning. The second thing that I wanted to maybe bring to your attention is that in the army we put everyone -- they have all have a gun, even if they have killed, raped, massacred people, they come in the army.

Everyone is nice; they accept everyone in the army without making any distinctions and forget their past. But we have completely forgotten that there are children that go into the army at 10 years old, and that this children, this is how they learn culture, they learn hate, a culture of destruction, and therefore they have all the power they could want, money, food, women and everything they could want. And they live like this for 10 years, and as we said right away here there is a system that causes all these children, even if they're 20 years old, they're not normal.

And we integrate them in the army without a legitimate process for them to know what people are subjected to. They are not checked for traumatization, they don't have any psychological examinations, they go in the army. And what we have observed, in the month of March we convicted a colonel for rape, gave him, I believe, 20 years in prison. In the same place, the month before, another colonel had raped 160 women. He ordered his men to rape 160 women.

That shows how in the society, in fact, the people are completely destroyed and we ask that those who have raped yesterday to protect their victims today. And I think that is the basis of the impunity, and that's a model that does not work. I think if we want to help Congo today, we need to know that in Congo we have to really fight against impunity. We have to redo the justice system and there is not an army.

I can't believe that someone who has been destroyed for 10 or 15 years, that we can ask them to do the opposite of what they've always done. We have to completely redo the army, and the only way is to put these people in submission, to detraumatize them, to take control of them psychologically and give them community work that could help them to develop properly and recover in them young people that are ready do to civil protection. If not, we're going to have the same situation for a very long time. Thank you.

**Warren Hoge:**

We have time for two more questions. I promised this woman here, but Anne, did you raise your hand? And then you'll be the final question.

**Anne Anderson:**

Anne Anderson, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN. I had a question earlier actually but a lot has been said since that is truly shocking but I don't think it takes away from the issue that I wanted to raise. We have been talking forever about peacekeeping, peace building. That it's not sequential, it's supposed to happen simultaneously. And you build national capacity from the outset and so on. It's clear this has been a complete failure in DRC. I mean, I've known all along from talking to people in DPKO that they are extremely concerned. When the peacekeepers go, when MONUSCO goes, what's left behind in terms of the national army in terms of carrying out the protection of civilians.

I hadn't realized until hearing the testimony this morning quite how shockingly deep-seated the problem is, and I think Margot shed a little ray of light at the beginning, saying, well, at least the beginning has been made on trying to tackle certain perpetrators and end the culture of impunity. But clearly the effort to recreate the national army so that it can carry out protection of civilians, it's an almost impossibly huge task.

So why hasn't more been done? Is it in the chaos of the Congo it's simply impossible? Is it lack of political will, is it lack of funding? Is it lack of proper UN engagement? How have we come to this point that, you know, the municipal goals, handing over protection of civilians to an army in that shape, it defies all probability that it can work. How has it come to this basically was my question.

**Warren Hoge:**

Keep that question in mind. The final question here and then I'll ask you both to answer both questions.

**Samantha Basile:**

Hi. Thank you very much for your presentation Dr. Mukwege. My name is Samantha Basile. I am from Teacher's College at Columbia University, and I did my Master's thesis research in the Congo, I was there for one month. And I was wondering what the role of education is in ending violence against women and also treating women who have been victims of violence. Thank you.

**Warren Hoge:**

I think I'm going to ask Margot Wallström first to answer those two questions and then Dr. Mukwege, you will have the final comment.

**Margot Wallström:**

Well, Ambassador Anderson, I could have paid you for asking that question because I think both of us, we have the same message to give about the coordination between the countries who are big donors, big partners to the government of the DRC, to better coordinate their efforts when it comes to making sure there is security sector reform.

I think that maybe any government would prefer to have bilateral context. Maybe you can sort of get more out of such an arrangement, but I think for security sector reform this is detrimental. And it needs a better coordination between the big donor countries and the big partners to the DRC to ensure that there is true security sector reform. This army is too big. The counting is close to 200,000 people; exactly where they are, nobody is quite sure.

They do not have enough food. They do not have barracks. They do not have proper training. They are not vetted. So I have often given the picture of this soldier from the FYR with a rifle here, with a kid on his arm, with kitchen utensils on his head and his wife walking 20 meters behind with another couple of kids. And they live in a ramshackle tent.

And the wife now that followed this colonel left the training center abandoned also because they could not find enough food, they were very displeased with how all of these things are now being rearranged within the FARDC. There is so much missing, and it's also a misery within the FARDC, within the national army. It is absolutely crucial to have a reform on the security sector, because people cannot trust them.

They can work with neither the police nor the military and trust that they will protect the civilians. But it takes, even the states who are active, who are partners, who are donors, also coordinate better what they do, because now they build training centers and some of them are empty with full equipment. One country built a prison with 1,000 cells that was not opened for a very, very long time because the government could not decide who would hold the key and get the advantages of being in power.

So if we allow this to happen, we will not get a reform either, but this has to change, otherwise they will continue to have to live off the population. They are deployed to areas without food, without salaries, without barracks. So of course, they then live off the population and with it comes rape. So they are a big threat, a huge threat to the security of women.

So this is one of our favorite subjects and so thank you for asking. We think that this is really what is necessary now and it is also suffering among many of the soldiers that I think has not -- that story has not been

told enough. So it's not only their fault, but bad leadership and the dire need for reform. So this is what we will have to encourage more from now on.

**Dr. Denis Mukwege:**

I don't know if I can add much more to what Madame has already said, but I want to underline an aspect. It's the aspect in fact that there are two types of army that we can observe. The army that protects the government, the presidential guard, they are often debarking with 40 or 50 people, well armed, with vehicles, everything you'd want. This army exists. I have the impression that the fact that the government feels that it is very well protected. That's their priority but not the army to protect the population, because this army as well is against the members of the government.

That's an aspect that is very important, and that's where I rejoin Margot Wallström is it is very important, everyone wants to do something. Everyone wants to resolve the problem, but the total lack of coordination, the government takes advantage to make bilateral relationships. Each time they form a battalion, you come back a year later, this battalion doesn't exist, they have all dispersed.

I have the impression that it's a diversion to be able to make a crisis, unfortunately, but also takes a lot more weight on the dictatorial plan, putting it in place, because they're trying to put in place an army that is an army for the government and not for the population. I think that without coordination, for the moment it costs much for Congo when I say that there is not an army it's that we have done with MONUSCO, we have tried to regroup the army base, and put them together, but it's not the army corps, it's just groups of armies that we recuperate together, but we don't have the same construction, command system, or when you ask the question of command, all the groups in the army, in the sites have refused to leave.

When we called them from the interior of the country, they refused to leave. That's not an army. An army is regardless a command, a discipline. And I think it's that. We have to ask ourselves is there an army? And I think the response for the moment there is not an army for the population, there is an army for the directors.

**Margot Wallström:**

If I could just add one sentence. Maybe there would be more countries who would say we offer to take 10,000 soldiers out of the army, we will pay them to actually build routes or make sure that there is electricity or drilling some wells in some of these villages. That would also increase or improve the lives of these women, to make sure that it is also sustainable over a longer period of time.

Offer them an alternative and take some people out of that too-large army with something meaningful to do, because this is what they really need. So there has to be a long-term plan also, what do you do with all these soldiers when you demobilize and take their arms away? They have to offer another option.

**Warren Hoge:**

We've run a little over time. I would apologize except I don't think anybody in the audience minds the fact that we've devoted a few more minutes to two people who speak with such authority and such clarity about a situation that is so critical. Thank you for your attention, your

questions, and panelists. Thank you, particularly Dr. Mukwege and Margot Wallström, for coming here this morning.