



# AHMUN 8.0

## Study Guide



## United Nations Security Council

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## Letter from the Executive Board

*Dear Delegates,*

*It is a pleasure to welcome all of you to the United Nations' Security Council at AHMUN 8.0. This study guide should only be used as a base for your research because it is very important to understand that the Best Delegate isn't someone who knows just the study guide inside and out, but someone who also extends their research beyond the guide. You should always remember that the study guide is a document shared with all the delegates of your committee; you shouldn't limit your knowledge to the guide itself. It is up to the delegates of the committee to decide the scope of discussion and narrow it down to what needs to be discussed effectively. It is recommended that when discussing the agenda, you must keep it relevant to the mandate of the UNSC*

*The UNSC is one of the most important UN committees, as this is one of the only few committees that can actually implement its decisions, almost immediately. The UNSC can discuss anything ranging from a humanitarian crisis to a nuclear emergency. While the agenda for this edition is to discuss the Illicit Mineral Trading in DRC, it is important for you, as delegates, to bring in relevant themes and layers to the committee in order to stand out. A great delegate is someone who can cover as much as possible with maximum participation and efficient statements.*



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*It is also very important for you, as the delegates of the UNSC, to be well acquainted with the UN Charter, namely chapters 4-8. The same can be found on the UNO's website*

*(<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text>)*

*We, your executive board, are extremely glad to be hosting you at AHMUN 8.0 for this edition and look forward to moderating the debate. Also, we won't be allowing the use of electronic devices and/or the internet during committee sessions. All the best!*

*Regards,*

*Hrashkumar Kedia - Chairperson*

*Kairav Shah - Vice Chairperson*

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## “Addressing the Crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with Special Emphasis on Illicit Mineral Trade and Foreign Intervention”

### Committee Overview

Established in 1945 under the Charter of the United Nations, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations and bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Unlike most other UN bodies, the Security Council possesses the authority to adopt legally binding decisions that all UN Member States are obligated to comply with.

The Security Council consists of fifteen members. Five of these are permanent members (P5) — China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States — while the remaining ten are elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms. Each member possesses one vote. However, the permanent members possess a special voting privilege known as the veto power, which allows any one of them to block the adoption of a substantive resolution regardless of the level of support from other members.



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The Security Council serves as the primary international body responsible for responding to threats to peace, armed conflicts, acts of aggression, and situations that may destabilise international security. To fulfil this role, the Council may investigate disputes, facilitate negotiations, establish peacekeeping missions, impose sanctions, authorise military action under specific circumstances, and oversee arms control initiatives.

For delegates participating in the Security Council, understanding the Council's powers is essential because resolutions adopted by the UNSC often have direct legal and political consequences for states and non-state actors worldwide.

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## **Mandate and Limitations of the Security Council**

### *UNSC Mandate at a Glance*

According to the Charter, the Security Council has primary responsibility for the upkeep of intercontinental peace and security. It has 15 Members, and each Member has one vote. Under the Charter, all Member States are obligated to comply with Council decisions. The Security Council takes the lead in defining the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression. It calls upon the parties to a dispute to settle it by peaceful means and endorses methods of adjustment or terms of settlement. In some cases, the Security Council can resort to imposing sanctions or even authorize the use of force to maintain or reinstate international peace and security.

The Security Council also recommends to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and the admission of new Members to the United Nations. And, together with the General Assembly, it elects the judges of the International Court of Justice. The UN Charter established six main organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council. It gives primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security to the Security Council, which may meet whenever peace is threatened.



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According to the Charter, the United Nations has four purposes:

- to maintain international peace and security;
- to develop friendly relations among nations;
- to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights;
- To be a Centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.

All members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. While other organs of the United Nations make recommendations to member states, only the Security Council has the power to make decisions that member states are then obligated to implement under the Charter.

When a complaint concerning a threat to peace is brought before it, the Council's first action is usually to recommend that the parties try to reach agreement by peaceful means. The Council may:

- set forth principles for such an agreement;
- undertake investigation and mediation, in some cases;
- dispatch a mission;
- appoint special envoys; or
- Request the Secretary-General to use his good offices to achieve a pacific settlement of the dispute.

When a dispute leads to hostilities, the Council's primary concern is to bring them to an end as soon as possible. In that case, the Council may:



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- issue ceasefire directives that can help prevent an escalation of the conflict;
- Dispatch military observers or a peacekeeping force to help reduce tensions, separate opposing forces and establish a calm in which peaceful settlements may be sought.

Beyond this, the Council may opt for enforcement measures, including:

- economic sanctions, arms embargoes, financial penalties and restrictions, and travel bans;
- severance of diplomatic relations;
- blockade;
- Even collective military action.

A chief concern is to focus action on those responsible for the policies or practices condemned by the international community, while minimizing the impact of the measures.

When drafting resolutions, delegates must clearly understand both the authority and the limitations of the Security Council.

## ***Mandate of the Security Council***

Under Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, Member States confer upon the Security Council the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. In carrying out this responsibility, the Council acts on behalf of all UN Member States.



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The Council is empowered to:

- Investigate disputes or situations that may threaten international peace and security.
- Recommend peaceful methods for resolving disputes.
- Determine whether a situation constitutes a threat to peace, a breach of peace, or an act of aggression.
- Establish peacekeeping operations.
- Impose economic, diplomatic, and targeted sanctions.
- Authorise collective action, including the use of force, when necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security.
- Create monitoring mechanisms, sanctions committees, and expert panels.
- Refer situations to international judicial bodies under certain circumstances.

One important distinction delegates should understand is the difference between Chapter VI and Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

Chapter VI focuses on the peaceful settlement of disputes. Under this chapter, the Security Council primarily makes recommendations and encourages negotiations, mediation, arbitration, and diplomacy.

Chapter VII applies when the Council determines that there is a threat to international peace and security. Under this chapter, the Council may impose sanctions and authorise enforcement measures, including military action.



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## *Limitations -*

Despite its extensive powers, the Security Council is not unlimited in its authority.

The Council must operate in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, including respect for state sovereignty and international law.

Additionally, the veto power often limits the Council's ability to act. Any substantive resolution can be blocked if one permanent member votes against it, even if the majority of Council members support the proposal.

The Security Council also does not directly govern states, administer domestic policies, or permanently replace national governments. Long-term implementation of resolutions ultimately depends on the cooperation and political will of Member States.



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## Introduction to the Agenda

*“Addressing the Crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with Special Emphasis on Illicit Mineral Trade and Foreign Intervention”*

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is currently facing one of the world's most complex and long-running humanitarian and security crises. Despite possessing vast natural wealth and significant mineral reserves, decades of armed conflict, political instability, foreign involvement, and weak governance have contributed to persistent violence, particularly in the eastern provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri.

The crisis involves numerous armed groups competing for territory, resources, and political influence. Many of these groups finance their operations through the illegal exploitation and trade of valuable minerals such as gold, coltan, tin, tungsten, and cobalt. These minerals are often smuggled across borders and enter international supply chains, generating significant profits that can be used to sustain conflict.

The situation is further complicated by the involvement of neighbouring states and regional actors. Historical grievances, security concerns, ethnic tensions, and economic interests have contributed to repeated allegations of foreign support for armed groups operating within Congolese territory.



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These dynamics have transformed what might otherwise be an internal conflict into a broader regional security challenge.

The humanitarian consequences have been severe. Millions of people have been displaced from their homes, civilians continue to face violence and human rights abuses, and access to food, healthcare, and education remains limited in many conflict-affected areas. The United Nations has repeatedly identified eastern DRC as one of the most serious humanitarian emergencies in the world.

As the primary UN body responsible for maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council has remained actively involved in the DRC through peacekeeping operations, sanctions regimes, monitoring mechanisms, and diplomatic initiatives.

Nevertheless, the persistence of conflict demonstrates the complexity of addressing the underlying causes of instability.

For delegates, understanding the relationship between armed groups, illicit mineral trade, regional politics, and foreign intervention will be essential in developing meaningful and sustainable solutions.

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## Historical Background of the Conflict

Understanding the current crisis requires an examination of the historical developments that shaped the Democratic Republic of the Congo and contributed to the emergence of modern conflict dynamics.

### 1. *Colonial Legacy*

The territory now known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo experienced extensive colonial exploitation under Belgian rule. During the colonial period, economic policies focused heavily on resource extraction rather than institution-building. As a result, when the country achieved independence in 1960, many state institutions remained weak and underdeveloped.

Political instability emerged soon after independence. Internal power struggles, regional tensions, and foreign interference contributed to decades of governance challenges that weakened state authority and limited the government's ability to effectively manage its vast territory.

### 2. *The Rwandan Genocide and Regional Spillover (1994)*

A major turning point in the history of the Democratic Republic of the Congo occurred in 1994 during the Genocide against the Tutsi in neighbouring Rwanda. Between April and July 1994, extremist Hutu militias and elements of the Rwandan government carried out a genocide that resulted in the deaths of approximately 800,000 people, primarily Tutsis and moderate Hutus.



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The genocide ended when the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a rebel movement led by Paul Kagame, defeated the genocidal government and took control of Rwanda.

Following the genocide, approximately 1.4 million refugees fled into eastern Zaire (present-day Democratic Republic of the Congo). Among these refugees were former members of the Rwandan Armed Forces and militia groups that had participated in the genocide.

Many of these armed groups established themselves in refugee camps located near the Rwanda–Zaire border. From these bases, some groups launched attacks into Rwanda and continued to pose a security threat to the new Rwandan government.

As a result, the conflict in Rwanda began to spill across international borders and increasingly affected eastern Zaire. This phenomenon is often referred to as regional spillover, where instability in one country contributes to insecurity in neighbouring states.

At the same time, Zaire itself was experiencing significant political and economic difficulties. President Mobutu Sese Seko had ruled the country for more than three decades, but his overnment faced widespread criticism for corruption, poor governance, and an inability to effectively control large areas of the country, particularly in the east.

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The combination of armed groups operating from eastern Zaire, regional security concerns, and growing dissatisfaction with Mobutu's government created conditions that would eventually contribute to the outbreak of the First Congo War.

### *3. The First Congo War (1996–1997)*

By 1996, tensions in eastern Zaire had reached a critical point.

The Rwandan government argued that armed groups responsible for the 1994 genocide continued to operate from eastern Zaire and posed an ongoing threat to Rwandan national security. Meanwhile, the government of President Mobutu Sese Seko was increasingly weakened by corruption, economic decline, and declining public support.

In response to these developments, Rwanda and Uganda supported a Congolese rebel coalition known as the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL), which was led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila.

It is important to note that the conflict was not simply an invasion by foreign states. Rather, it involved a combination of domestic opposition to Mobutu's rule and support provided by neighbouring countries that had their own security and political interests in the region. The AFDL launched a military campaign across Zaire and rapidly gained territory. As government forces weakened, Mobutu's regime collapsed.



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In May 1997, Mobutu fled the country and Laurent-Désiré Kabila assumed power. One of his first actions was to officially rename the country from Zaire to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Although the First Congo War succeeded in removing Mobutu from power, many of the underlying problems remained unresolved. Armed groups continued to operate in eastern Congo, regional tensions persisted, and relations between Kabila and his former allies soon began to deteriorate.

These unresolved issues would eventually contribute to the outbreak of an even larger conflict: the Second Congo War.

#### *4. The Emergence of Armed Groups*

Following the Second Congo War, numerous armed groups remained active in eastern Congo.

Some groups claimed to protect particular ethnic communities, while others focused on controlling territory, trade routes, and mineral-rich areas. Over time, competition for access to natural resources became increasingly linked to armed violence.

The presence of these groups contributed to recurring cycles of conflict, insecurity, and humanitarian crises.

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## 5. *The Creation of MONUC and MONUSCO*

In 1999, the United Nations established the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to monitor ceasefire agreements and support peace efforts.

In 2010, MONUC was reconfigured into the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), reflecting a broader mandate focused on civilian protection, stabilisation, and support for state institutions.

MONUSCO remains one of the largest and most significant peacekeeping missions ever established by the United Nations.

## 6. *The Contemporary Crisis*

Despite numerous peace agreements and international interventions, eastern DRC continues to experience conflict involving armed groups such as M23, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), CODECO, and other militias.

Today, many of the same issues that contributed to earlier conflicts remain unresolved, including:

- Competition over natural resources.
- Weak state authority in some regions.
- Cross-border security concerns.
- Ethnic tensions.
- Foreign involvement.
- Humanitarian emergencies.



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Consequently, the modern crisis should not be viewed as a single conflict but rather as the latest phase of a broader regional struggle shaped by historical, political, economic, and security factors. International response efforts continue to adapt, most recently underscored by the UN Security Council's unanimous adoption of **Resolution 2825 (June 2026)**, which established stringent new measures targeting entities financing armed groups through natural resources.

## Understanding the Current Crisis

The contemporary crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is the result of multiple interconnected factors that have developed over decades. While the conflict is often portrayed as a single war, it is more accurately understood as a complex security challenge involving armed groups, illicit economic networks, foreign involvement, governance weaknesses, and humanitarian emergencies.

The four dimensions most relevant to this agenda are armed groups, illicit mineral trade, foreign intervention, and humanitarian consequences. Although each issue presents unique challenges, all four are closely interconnected and frequently reinforce one another.

Armed groups often finance themselves through the illegal extraction and trade of minerals. Foreign actors have been accused of supporting or influencing certain groups for security, political, or economic reasons. The resulting violence contributes to displacement, human rights abuses, and humanitarian crises affecting millions of civilians.



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Understanding these linkages is essential for delegates seeking comprehensive and sustainable solutions.

- *Armed Groups*

Armed groups remain one of the primary drivers of insecurity in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Although the formal wars that devastated the country officially ended years ago, numerous non-state armed groups continue to operate across several provinces, particularly North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri.

An armed group refers to an organised non-state actor that uses violence or the threat of violence to pursue political, military, economic, or territorial objectives. While some groups claim to represent particular ethnic communities or security interests, others are primarily motivated by economic gain through the control of resources, trade routes, and local populations.

The United Nations has identified more than one hundred armed groups operating in eastern DRC, though their size, capabilities, and objectives vary considerably.

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Several groups have played particularly significant roles in recent years.

- *M23 (March 23 Movement)*

M23 is one of the most prominent armed groups currently operating in eastern DRC. The group emerged in 2012 following disputes between former rebels and the Congolese government regarding the implementation of a previous peace agreement signed on 23 March 2009.

After suffering military defeats in 2013, M23 re-emerged in late 2021 and has since captured significant territory in North Kivu Province. The group has become a central focus of regional and international diplomatic efforts due to its military capabilities and territorial gains.

- *Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)*

The Allied Democratic Forces originated in Uganda but later established a significant presence in eastern DRC. The group has been responsible for numerous attacks against civilians and security forces. In recent years, the organisation has been associated with extremist violence and remains a major security concern.

- *Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR)*

The FDLR was established by individuals linked to the aftermath of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. The continued presence of the group in eastern DRC remains a major source of tension between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

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- *CODECO*

The Cooperative for the Development of the Congo (CODECO) is an armed group active primarily in Ituri Province. The group has been associated with intercommunal violence, attacks on civilians, and localised territorial conflicts.

The continued presence of armed groups undermines state authority, weakens economic development, contributes to displacement, and creates significant obstacles to long-term peace and stability.

- *Illicit Mineral Trade*

The Democratic Republic of the Congo possesses some of the world's most valuable mineral deposits. These resources contribute significantly to the global economy and are essential for modern industries, including electronics, renewable energy technologies, and manufacturing. However, the exploitation of these resources has also become closely linked to conflict and insecurity.

The term conflict minerals generally refers to minerals extracted and traded in ways that directly or indirectly finance armed groups, contribute to violence, or undermine legitimate governance structures.

Several minerals are particularly important within the context of this agenda.

- Gold remains one of the most commonly smuggled minerals due to its high value and ease of transport.



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- Coltan is used in the production of electronic devices such as smartphones, computers, and gaming systems.
- Tin and tungsten are widely used in manufacturing and industrial production.

Cobalt, a mineral for which the DRC possesses some of the world's largest reserves, plays a critical role in the production of rechargeable batteries used in electric vehicles and consumer electronics.

Armed groups frequently generate revenue through illegal taxation, extortion, control of mining sites, and smuggling operations. Minerals extracted from conflict-affected areas may be transported across international borders and mixed with legally sourced minerals before entering global supply chains. This process makes tracing the origin of minerals extremely difficult, creating persistent challenges for governments, international organizations, and private companies attempting to ensure responsible sourcing practices.

- ***Foreign Intervention***

Foreign intervention remains one of the most sensitive and controversial aspects of the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Due to its strategic location in Central Africa and its extensive natural resources, developments within the DRC frequently attract the attention of neighbouring states, regional organisations, and other international actors.



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The Democratic Republic of the Congo shares borders with nine countries, making regional security dynamics particularly significant. Instability within eastern Congo often affects neighbouring states through refugee movements, cross-border armed activity, and economic disruption, while developments in neighbouring countries can directly influence security conditions within the DRC.

In recent years, particular attention has focused on allegations regarding external support for armed groups operating within eastern DRC. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, United Nations experts, and several international actors have raised concerns regarding foreign involvement in the conflict.

At the same time, neighbouring states have frequently cited security concerns arising from armed groups operating near their borders as justification for their actions and policies.

These competing narratives have contributed to diplomatic tensions throughout the region. Foreign intervention may take multiple forms, including military support, logistical assistance, intelligence sharing, political backing, economic involvement, or cross-border security operations.

A major diplomatic framework emerged via the Washington Accords for Peace and Prosperity, a bilateral initiative aimed at de-escalating cross-border hostilities and fostering regional economic integration between the DRC and its neighbors.

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Because accusations of foreign involvement involve highly sensitive political issues, delegates should approach this topic carefully and rely upon verified information from credible international sources. The Security Council continues to emphasize the importance of respecting the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

- *Humanitarian Consequences*

The humanitarian consequences of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are among the most severe in the world.

Decades of violence, displacement, food insecurity, and instability have created a prolonged humanitarian emergency affecting millions of people.

Armed conflict has forced large numbers of civilians to flee their homes. Many become internally displaced persons (IDPs), while others seek refuge in neighbouring countries. Displacement often results in loss of livelihoods, disruption of education, limited access to healthcare, and increased vulnerability to exploitation.

Conflict-affected communities also face significant food insecurity. Violence frequently disrupts agricultural production, damages infrastructure, and restricts access to markets, making it difficult for families to obtain sufficient food.

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Women and children are disproportionately affected by the crisis. International organisations have repeatedly documented cases of gender-based violence, child recruitment by armed groups, and violations of children's rights.

Healthcare systems in conflict-affected areas face substantial challenges due to insecurity, inadequate infrastructure, and limited resources. Disease outbreaks and insufficient access to medical services further exacerbate humanitarian needs.

The long-term consequences extend beyond immediate suffering. Generations of Congolese citizens have grown up amid conflict, creating lasting social, economic, and developmental challenges.

For the Security Council, civilian protection remains one of the most important priorities when addressing the crisis.

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## **International Legal Framework**

The crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been addressed through a combination of international law, United Nations Security Council resolutions, peacekeeping mandates, sanctions regimes, and regional cooperation mechanisms. Together, these frameworks provide the legal and institutional basis for international efforts to address armed conflict, illicit mineral exploitation, foreign intervention, and humanitarian challenges in the DRC.

Given the transnational nature of the conflict, international cooperation remains essential to promoting peace, protecting civilians, and supporting regional stability.

### **1. *United Nations Charter***

The United Nations Charter serves as the primary legal foundation for Security Council action concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Under Article 24 of the Charter, the Security Council bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. When a situation threatens regional or international stability, the Council may investigate the matter and adopt measures aimed at restoring peace.

Chapter VI of the Charter encourages the peaceful settlement of disputes through negotiation, mediation, conciliation, and other diplomatic means.



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Chapter VII allows the Security Council to determine whether a situation constitutes a threat to international peace and security. If such a determination is made, the Council may impose sanctions, establish peacekeeping operations, and authorise additional measures necessary to restore stability.

Chapter VIII recognises the role of regional arrangements in resolving disputes that are authorised and enforced by the Security Council.

The Charter also upholds the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence, which remain central to discussions regarding foreign intervention and cross-border activity within the DRC.

## ***2. Key Security Council Mechanisms in the DRC***

The Security Council has employed several mechanisms to address the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

MONUSCO, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, remains one of the principal tools used by the Security Council to support civilian protection, stabilisation efforts, and peacebuilding initiatives. Established originally as MONUC in 1999 and reconfigured as MONUSCO in 2010, the mission continues to assist in maintaining security and supporting state institutions in conflict-affected areas. The Security Council has also established a sanctions regime aimed at individuals and entities responsible for threatening peace and security in the DRC.

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Measures have included arms embargoes, travel bans, and asset freezes targeting designated actors involved in conflict-related activities.

To support implementation and monitoring, the Council created a Group of Experts responsible for investigating sanctions violations, illicit resource exploitation, arms trafficking, and other developments relevant to the conflict.

Together, these mechanisms allow the Security Council to monitor developments, support peace efforts, and respond to threats to regional stability.

However, the Security Council has indicated signs of discontinuing MONUSCO and withdrawing its effect within DRC as it is one of the costliest programmes run by the Security Council. This raises several concerns for the discussion of the Security Council:

- Cost effective solutions to the armed conflict
  - Introduction of usage of innovative technology to monitor the illicit trade as well as the armed conflicts
  - Supporting the effective use of regional instruments to solve the conflict
  - Adopting a humanitarian and conclusive approach to secure the rights of the affected parties in the conflict
  - Acknowledging the economic impact of the essential minerals in DRC and discussing a solution that balances the security interests as well as the economic implications
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## 3. Key Security Council Resolutions

Several Security Council resolutions have significantly shaped the international response to the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

<b>Resolution</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Significance</b>
1279	1999	Established MONUC, the predecessor to MONUSCO.
1493	2003	Expanded the UN mandate and introduced an arms embargo.
2098	2013	Created the Force Intervention Brigade to address armed groups.
2666	2022	Renewed MONUSCO's mandate and emphasised civilian protection and regional stability.
1925	2010	Established MONUSCO
2808	2025	The mandate of MONUSCO is renewed until 2026
2825	2026	Established stringent new measures targeting entities financing armed groups through natural resources.



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## Case Studies

The following case studies illustrate how armed conflict, illicit mineral trade, foreign intervention, and humanitarian challenges intersect within the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Delegates are encouraged to analyse these examples not as isolated incidents, but as reflections of broader trends shaping the contemporary crisis.

### *Case Study 1: Rubaya Mining Area and Conflict Minerals*

- *Background*

Rubaya, located in North Kivu Province, is one of the most significant coltan-producing regions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Coltan is an essential mineral used in the manufacture of electronic devices, including smartphones, computers, and other consumer technologies. The area's considerable mineral wealth has made it a strategic objective for armed groups seeking revenue and territorial influence.

- *Strategic Importance*

Several factors contribute to Rubaya's significance:

- One of the largest coltan-producing areas in the region.
- Important source of revenue for both legal and illicit actors.
- Strategic location near major transportation and trading routes.
- Strong connection to international mineral supply chains.



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- **Conflict Dynamics**

Control over mining sites has frequently become intertwined with armed conflict. Armed groups have sought to establish influence over mining operations, transportation routes, and local populations. The resulting competition has contributed to insecurity, weakened state authority, and increased opportunities for illicit mineral extraction and smuggling.

- *Significance*

The Rubaya case demonstrates how natural resources can become a source of conflict rather than development when governance structures are weak. The case highlights the relationship between mineral exploitation, armed group financing, and regional instability, making it particularly relevant to discussions concerning conflict minerals and responsible supply chains.

## ***Case Study 2: The Siege of Goma and Civilian Displacement***

- *Background*

Goma, the capital of North Kivu Province, is one of the most strategically important cities in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Located near the border with Rwanda, the city serves as a major commercial, humanitarian, and administrative centre. In recent years, renewed fighting involving armed groups operating in North Kivu has increased pressure on the city and surrounding areas.



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- *Strategic Importance*

Several factors contribute to Goma's importance:

- Major economic hub in eastern DRC.
- Key transportation and trade centre.
- Important location for humanitarian operations.
- Proximity to international borders.

- *Humanitarian Consequences*

Escalating violence around Goma has resulted in large-scale population displacement. Many civilians have been forced to flee their homes in search of safety, placing additional pressure on humanitarian agencies and local infrastructure. Displacement has also contributed to challenges relating to food security, healthcare access, shelter provision, and civilian protection.

- *Significance*

The situation surrounding Goma illustrates how armed conflict directly affects civilian populations. The case demonstrates the connection between territorial competition, insecurity, and humanitarian emergencies, highlighting the importance of civilian protection within Security Council discussions.



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## *Case Study 3: The Nairobi and Luanda Peace Processes*

- *Background*

Recognising the growing regional implications of the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, regional leaders have undertaken several diplomatic initiatives aimed at reducing tensions and promoting peaceful solutions. Two of the most significant efforts have been the Nairobi Process and the Luanda Process.

The Nairobi Process has been facilitated through regional cooperation mechanisms and has focused on dialogue between the Congolese government and various armed groups. The Luanda Process, led by Angola, has sought to reduce tensions between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and neighbouring states while promoting ceasefire arrangements and diplomatic engagement.

- *Objectives*

Key objectives of these initiatives include:

1. Reducing armed violence.
2. Supporting ceasefire agreements.
3. Encouraging political dialogue.
4. Strengthening regional cooperation.
5. Preventing escalation of interstate tensions.



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- *Challenges*

Despite progress in certain areas, implementation has remained difficult. Persistent insecurity, mistrust among stakeholders, violations of ceasefire agreements, and the continued presence of armed groups have complicated efforts to achieve lasting peace.

- *Significance*

The Nairobi and Luanda Processes demonstrate that military solutions alone are unlikely to resolve the crisis. The case highlights the importance of diplomacy, mediation, and regional cooperation in addressing the root causes of conflict and preventing further escalation.

## ***Case Study 4: Illegal Gold Smuggling Networks in Eastern DRC***

- *Background*

Gold is one of the most valuable and widely traded minerals produced in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Unlike minerals such as coltan or cobalt, gold is relatively easy to transport, conceal, and sell, making it particularly attractive to criminal networks and armed groups.

Over the years, international organisations and United Nations experts have repeatedly expressed concern regarding the large quantities of Congolese gold leaving the country through informal and illicit channels.



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- *Why Gold is Vulnerable to Smuggling?*

Several factors contribute to the prevalence of gold smuggling:

1. High value relative to its size and weight.
2. Difficulty in determining the origin of processed gold.
3. Limited oversight in remote mining areas.
4. Weak border monitoring and customs enforcement.
5. Strong international demand for gold.

- *Smuggling Networks*

Gold extracted in conflict-affected regions may pass through multiple intermediaries before reaching international markets. In some cases, gold is transported across borders and mixed with legally sourced supplies, making it difficult to identify its original source. As a result, significant quantities of Congolese gold may enter international supply chains without passing through official export channels.

- *Consequences*

The illicit movement of gold has several important consequences:

- Loss of government revenue through tax evasion and unregulated trade.
- Continued financing opportunities for armed groups and criminal networks.
- Increased corruption and weakened state oversight.
- Reduced transparency within international mineral supply chains.



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- *Significance*

The issue of gold smuggling demonstrates that addressing conflict minerals requires more than securing mining areas alone. Even when efforts are made to regulate mineral extraction, weak border controls, corruption, and illicit trade networks may continue to allow conflict resources to reach international markets. The case highlights the importance of regional cooperation, customs monitoring, supply-chain transparency, and enforcement mechanisms in addressing the economic dimensions of the conflict.



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## **Suggested Moderated Caucus Topics**

1. The Prioritisation of Military Action or Political Dialogue in Resolving the Crisis in Eastern DRC
  2. The Responsibility of the International Community in Preventing the Exploitation of Conflict Minerals
  3. Reassessing the Security Council's Approach to Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
  4. Addressing the Regionalisation of the Conflict in the Great Lakes Region
  5. Balancing Resource Security with Sustainable Development in Conflict-Affected Regions
  6. Strengthening Accountability for Violations of International Humanitarian Law in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
  7. Redefining International Strategies for Long-Term Stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
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## Concluding Remarks

The crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains one of the most complex and persistent challenges facing the international community. Through the activities of armed groups, the illicit exploitation and trade of natural resources, foreign involvement, and recurring humanitarian emergencies, the conflict has continued to undermine security, governance, and development across the region.

As armed groups and conflict networks continue to adapt to changing political and economic conditions, addressing the crisis requires more than military responses alone. Sustainable peace will depend upon stronger institutions, effective governance, responsible management of natural resources, regional cooperation, and continued commitment to protecting civilian populations.

The challenge before this committee is not only to address the immediate manifestations of the conflict but also to confront the underlying conditions that allow instability to persist. Delegates must consider how issues such as illicit mineral trade, cross-border insecurity, weak governance structures, and humanitarian needs intersect and reinforce one another.



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Delegates should approach this agenda with the understanding that the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is not solely a security issue. It is simultaneously a governance challenge, a humanitarian challenge, a development challenge, and a regional stability challenge.

Meaningful solutions will therefore require comprehensive, collaborative, and sustainable approaches that reflect the complexity of the situation and the responsibilities of the international community. Furthermore, it is recommended to have a forward-thinking approach in discussions that take place.

The following 2 questions can be used as inspiration for the direction:

- 1. How can the international community enforce resource tracing mechanisms when armed groups use advanced technology and regional front companies to mask the origin of conflict minerals?*
  - 2. With the phased drawdown of MONUSCO, what multilateral frameworks can ensure civilian protection without violating the DRC's state sovereignty?*
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