

Press Releases: Democratic Republic of Congo: Government Repression and Violence Against Peaceful Protesters

Press Statement
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We condemn in the strongest terms the violence perpetrated by DRC security forces on January 21 against church-led peaceful protests that resulted in at least six confirmed deaths, dozens of injuries, and numerous arbitrary arrests.

We are appalled that the DRC government, including President Kabila, would employ repressive tactics and disproportionate use of lethal force against civilians – including religious leaders and children – exercising their democratic rights to call for credible and inclusive elections.

We are deeply concerned that the DRC government's January 21 violence and repression against its citizens follows just weeks after the government's attacks on peaceful protesters on December 31 which the United States and members of the United Nations Security Council condemned and called for accountability.

The use of lethal force against Congolese citizens, and the cutting of internet and SMS service, undermine the democratic process, obstruct implementation of the St. Sylvestre Accord and contravene international human rights norms.

We call on President Kabila to hold accountable security force members who fired on civilians or ordered the use of lethal force and urge him and his government to ensure a peaceful and open electoral process so that credible elections are held as scheduled in December 2018.

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