

DR Congo security forces committed rights violations against protestors in December 2016 – UN probe

1 March 2017 – Defence and security forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) used excessive, disproportionate and at times lethal force to prevent and contain demonstrations in December 2016, in violation of international human rights law and standards, a UN report has found.

“Measures should also be taken, at all levels, to ensure that the legitimate exercise of fundamental freedoms by the population will not lead to loss of lives and other serious rights violations,” UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein said today in a news release on the report.

The report is based on the findings of the investigation conducted by the human rights team comprising staff of the UN Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) and of the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

According to the report, at least 40 people, including five women and two children, were killed between 15 and 31 December 2016 across several cities of the DRC, among them the capital Kinshasa, as well as Lubumbashi, Boma and Matadi. The victims include 28 individuals who were killed by soldiers of the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC), six by agents of the Police Nationale Congolaise (PNC) and six during joint PNC and FARDC operations.

The report also revealed that all but two of the victims were killed by live ammunition. During the same period, at least 147 people were injured by State agents, including 14 women and 18 children, and at least 917 individuals, including 30 women and 95 children, were arrested by defence and security forces.

“Such serious incidents are worrisome, particularly in the current context,” said Maman Sambo Sidikou, the Secretary-General’s Special Representative in the DRC, citing the need to create an environment conducive to the holding of peaceful elections.

The lack of accountability for past human rights violations, including those committed during the demonstrations in Kinshasa on 19 and 20 September 2016, may have encouraged a sense of impunity, and defence and security forces to commit further violations in December 2016.

“Once again we see serious human rights violations being committed blatantly and with complete impunity by the security forces, who employed excessive use of force against unarmed demonstrators, in flagrant violation of international human rights law and standards,” said the UN human rights chief, Mr. Zeid.

He urged the Government to bring those responsible for such violations to justice and urgently adopt the law on freedom of peaceful protests and the law on human rights defenders.

Union Home Minister lays the foundation stone of the Demonstration Housing Project by BMTPC for Lucknow

The Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone of the Demonstration Housing Project by BMTPC (Building Materials & Technology Promotion Council) for Lucknow through video conferencing here today. Speaking on the occasion, Shri Rajnath Singh said this BMTPC project is a model housing project which will use ecofriendly materials and innovative technology to build houses for the poor.

LPG customers to now get a discount for on-line payment of LPG refill

Oil Marketing Companies, viz IndianOil, BPCL & HPCL are now offering an upfront discount of Rs 5/- on every

BHIM will create Equality

The new indigenously developed payment app 'BHIM' (Bharat Interface for Money) has been named after the main architect of Indian constitution

Press release: Minister condemns war crimes committed during battle of Aleppo

UN report confirms war crimes were committed during the battle of Aleppo.

The UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria has released its latest report, this time examining human rights violations and abuses committed during the offensive against eastern Aleppo in the second half of 2016.

The Commission found that all parties to the conflict had shown “a wilful disregard” for international humanitarian law and said that war crimes were committed.

Commenting on the report, Minister for the Middle East Tobias Ellwood said:

This latest UN report highlights the appalling suffering of the civilian population in eastern Aleppo, caused by the Syrian regime and its backers.

The regime and its backers are continuing to inflict indiscriminate bombardments and use starvation tactics in other parts of Syria, most alarmingly in the eastern Ghouta in rural Damascus. This UN report underlines the urgent need to strengthen the current ceasefire to avoid more innocent civilians enduring the same suffering as those in Aleppo.

The UK condemns in the strongest possible terms all human rights violations and abuses by all parties. We need to see a negotiated political transition to end this conflict and break the cycle of suffering. The UK will continue to work with international partners to support the people of Syria.

The report outlines how the Assad regime used indiscriminate weapons such as barrel bombs; cluster munitions; incendiary and chemical weapons. Syrian and Russian air strikes claimed hundreds of lives, destroyed vital civilian infrastructure and forcibly displaced the population of eastern Aleppo.

The full report can be found [here](#)

Further information