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### **Democratic Republic of Congo between humanitarian crisis and political instability**

The Democratic Republic of Congo is devastated by the conjunction of a serious humanitarian crisis and a situation of political instability that has subsequently worsened since the last few years. Armed conflicts increased since the end of 2016, particularly in the provinces of the Kasai and the Tanganyika, as well as attacks and clashes currently raging in the North and the South Kivu. Actually, 4,49 million of people are displaced, the highest number of any country in Africa, and 13,1 million of people are in need.

There are different levels of vulnerability: heavy epidemics such as measles and cholera outbreaks, food insecurity, malnutrition, water supply, sanitation and political instability. The humanitarian crisis strikes young people, women and above all children. In addition, the ethnic minorities are hit by serious violence. In the eastern Congo North Kivu and South Kivu provinces, more or less 100 armed groups continue to attack civilians, including the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and its allied Nyatura groups, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Nduma Defense of Congo-Renové (NDC-R), the Mazembe, Charles, and Yakutumba Mai Mai groups, and several Burundian armed groups.

The 2018 *Human Rights Watch* Report stressed, “In June 2017, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and nine former African presidents launched an “urgent appeal” to Kabila and other Congolese leaders for a peaceful, democratic transition. They warned that the future of the country is in grave danger.” In June, also the UN Human Rights Council authorized an international investigation into the violence happening in the Kasai region. In September, the Council also decided to increase an ongoing scrutiny over the broader situation in the country for another year, including in the context of the electoral process.

In conclusion, according to the *Reliefweb* Report, the level of democracy is declining due to President Joseph Kabila’s rejection to hold constitutionally mandated elections since August 2016. He has illegitimately extended his tenure by infringing the constitutional process, which only allows the President to serve two five-year mandates. Therefore, violent protests erupted, eliciting a forceful response by the

state. Over the last few months, the political repression across the country risks having very grave consequences.

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