



Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND
DEPUTY EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR, KYUNG-WHA KANG**

**PRESS REMARKS ON THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO
NOON BRIEFING, NEW YORK, 4 JUNE 2013**

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I visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda from 26 to 31 May, just last week. The purpose of my mission was to help keep the global spotlight on the complex and protracted humanitarian emergency in the DRC.

In the DRC, I visited Kinshasa and Goma in North Kivu as well as Bukavu and Walungu in South Kivu.

In Kinshasa, I met with Government officials and humanitarian partners. We discussed several issues, including the challenges in protecting civilians, the need for a more enabling environment for humanitarian actors, and the continued need for large-scale humanitarian response, particularly in the east.

In Goma, North Kivu, I visited a newly-established transitional site for displaced people in Sotraki. The site temporarily hosts some 3,000 people who were displaced by recent fighting between the Congolese armed forces and the M23 group from 20 to 22 May. And as you may know, the fighting ended just a few hours before the UN Secretary-General and World Bank President arrived in the DRC just a week before my visit. And these people are only part of the estimated 973,000 displaced people in North Kivu alone. There are more than 2.6 million internally displaced people across the country.

In Bukavu, South Kivu, I visited the Panzi Hospital, which provides medical and psychosocial support as well as legal advice to women and girls who have suffered rape and other sexual violence. I learned from Dr. Mukwege, the medical director in the hospital that there has indeed been an increase in the number of women and girls who have come to the hospital for treatment since 2012. Currently, the hospital receives some 300 survivors of rape per month.

From Bukavu, we also went to Walungu territory, where we visited the village of Mulamba, which hosts thousands of displaced people who have arrived since early 2013 due to armed attacks by the Raia Mutomboki armed group.

Representatives from displaced as well as the host communities whom I met in North and South Kivus all appealed very earnestly for peace so that they could resume their lives and livelihoods.

I emphasized the need to end the immense suffering of the people in the Kivus and other parts of the DRC where the violence has gone on for too long. And I called on all parties engaged in the conflict to fully respect International Humanitarian Law and to spare the civilians.

I was greatly impressed by the humanitarian efforts to provide urgent assistance to people in need. But despite these efforts, many people remain in need, outside the reach of humanitarian actors, especially in remote corners of eastern DRC that are beyond our reach. And this is due to a combination of insecurity, lack of resources and limited access that is affecting our ability to reach those people in need.

I continued on my mission to Kampala, Uganda, where I met with Government officials and UN humanitarian officials working in Burundi, DRC, Rwanda and Uganda to discuss the regional ramifications of the persisting humanitarian crisis in the DRC.

Everyone I met throughout my mission placed great hope in the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Great Lakes, and the visit of the Secretary-General and the World Bank President just a week before: the Framework designed to address the root causes of the prolonged conflict and to bring lasting peace for people in the DRC.