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United Nations Organization Mission
in the Democratic Republic of the Congo



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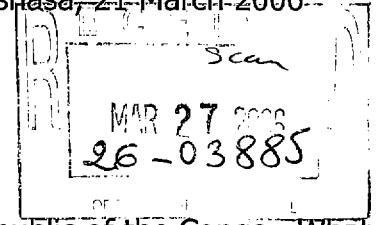
*Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations
in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*

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Kinshasa, 21 March 2006



Dear Mr. Secretary-General and Mrs. Annan,

Welcome back to MONUC and to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. What a joy and an honor to have you in our midst! Your presence here is a compelling statement to the Congolese people that the success of the DRC transition remains a high priority for the United Nations.

The timing of your visit is particularly poignant, coming as it does on the heels of voter registration in which some 25.7 million Congolese obtained voting cards - - the subsequent referendum in which 15 million voted massively (84%) for the new constitution in the first free poll in the DRC since 1960. These are landmark developments towards the organization in the next few months of free, fair and transparent elections at all levels. Adoption of essential legislation has been completed, with promulgation of the electoral law on March 9, followed by publication of the electoral timetable.

While a great deal has been accomplished, more than could have reasonably been expected, the remaining tasks are daunting: ensuring credible elections with stability; army and police integration and reform; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of Congolese combatants; and disarmament and repatriation of the 10.000 remnant foreign combatants in eastern DRC; and addressing widespread human rights violations.

His Excellency
Mr. Kofi Annan
Secretary General
United Nations
New York

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KINSHASA-GOMBE, République Démocratique du Congo

It is also urgent to address the legacy of war in the DRC, which is often referred to as the world's largest forgotten humanitarian crisis. Indeed, more than four million Congolese have died from war-related causes since 1998. At the rate of 1200 a day, Congolese continue to die from preventable causes - - equivalent to a tsunami every seven months. There remain 1.6 million internally displaced Congolese, down from 3.5 million two years ago. Hundreds of thousands of Congolese refugees remain, in all nine neighbouring states.

Despite the current crisis in which the transition architecture threatens to dismantle, all of the United Nations family in the Congo - agencies, funds, programmes and MONUC - - pledge to renew, revitalize and re-double our commitment to ensure that the transition succeeds via credible elections with stability.

We thank you both again for your unfailing support, of which your visit is only the latest expression thereof.

Please accept Mr. Secretary-General and Mrs. Annan the expression of my highest consideration. Kindest regards.



William Lacy Swing