

## Secretary-General Meeting with Mr. William Swing, SRSG, MONUC

*[Last week's violence in the DRC has highlighted worrying negative trends for the democratic development of the country. Following the violent events which shook Kinshasa last week, the security situation in Kinshasa has stabilized but remains tense. Senator Bemba remains in the South African Embassy and has not been allowed to leave the country. The Government is yet to pronounce itself on his future. There have been reports of harassment and looting of premises belonging to Senator Bemba's MLC (Mouvement de Libération du Congo) political party by President Kabila's Republican Guards. Meanwhile Senator Bemba's security elements have continued disarming under MONUC supervision.]*

### **Democratic Republic of the Congo**

- **I am very concerned by the recent developments in the DRC. The Bas Congo events and last week's violence in Kinshasa constitute serious setbacks for the democratic development of the country. What is your assessment of the recent events?**
- **Was there a unity of opinion within the Government over the recent events in Kinshasa? What impact are these events likely to have on the newly-formed Government, as well as on President Kabila's own coalition?**
- **I count on MONUC to stress that the Government needs to take meaningful steps to reverse these recent worrying trends and ensure that efforts to consolidate democracy are no longer undermined.**
- **We should also make it clear to the Government that harassment of Bemba's supporters and other members of the opposition is unacceptable and risks further violence and will alienate the international community.**
- **The Government should act responsibly following last week's events. It must above all prevent any attack on Senator Bemba, and should think carefully before taking any legal action against him. The rights and lives of Bemba's former guards should also be secured.**
- **A formula allowing for Bemba's continued participation will need to be found. The Government should be repeatedly reminded that Bemba's position as leader of the opposition was legitimated through free and fair elections. What can the UN do to help bring about a political solution to this situation?**
- **Every effort should be made to support the development of political space within the National Assembly, so that it can play its proper role as a check on executive power. I count on MONUC to continue working closely with the National Assembly and other political actors and institutions in that regard.**

- **The crisis also demonstrated the need for a platform for concerted action by the international community, both to support positive action by the Government and to anticipate and respond together to potential crises. We will continue to press for the establishment of such a platform.**
- **I also hope that by the end of the year, strategic solutions could be found to advance on the SSR track and to resolve major security issues facing Ituri and the Kivus, including the remnants of the FDLR and LRA. The UN is expected to contribute to these solutions in a major way.**

*[As reported by MONUC last month, there have been several incursions on the DRC's western border by Angolan forces, as well as an incursion on the country's eastern border by a Rwandan security team. In a letter to MONUC dated 29 March, the Government of Uganda protested incursions into Uganda and cross-border activities by armed groups that it said were present in the DRC.]*

- **In light of the recent reports of tension along the DRC's eastern and western borders, it would be important to expedite the ratification and implementation of the Pact on Stability, Security and Development for the Great Lakes Region.**
- **It would also be important for the UN family to see how it could support the newly-established regional follow-up mechanism of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region.**