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For each topic area, Representatives should consider the following questions. These questions should assist Representatives in gaining a better understanding of the issues at hand, particularly from your country's perspective:

- How did this conflict begin? Is this a new conflict or a re-ignition of a previous conflict?
- How have similar situations and conflicts been solved peacefully?
- What States and regional actors are involved in this conflict?
- If there are non-State actors involved in a conflict, are there any States supporting them? If so, which ones?

THE SITUATION IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

The Great Lakes region has seen nearly perpetual violence from civil wars, ethnic conflicts and military interventions over the last 20 years. Although the Second Congo War (1998-2003) ended a decade ago, the mineral rich eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has been vulnerable to spill-over violence and rebel groups receiving disclaimed support from neighboring states. Military intervention, intended to combat these rebel groups, has often created more problems than they have solved; more civilians have been killed as a result of this intervention than those killed by rebel groups.

During the Second Congo War the Security Council established the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to monitor the cease-fire agreements between warring factions within the DRC. As foreign armies pulled out of the DRC, violence increased as militant domestic factions evolved, merged and split over time. This ultimately created significant instability in the eastern provinces of Orientale, North Kivu, and South Kivu. The shifting security situation required greater peacekeeping forces over time, and the MONUC mandate shifted from monitoring cease-fires and the withdrawal of military forces to protecting civilians and monitoring human rights abuses. Eventually the mandate shifted further, including active pursuit of armed groups operating within the DRC as well as supporting the Congolese army, Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC).

MONUC discovered evidence that mass murders had occurred in the eastern DRC. This led the Secretary-General to create a mapping exercise aimed at finding the most serious human rights and humanitarian violations that had taken place. Conducted between 2008 and 2009, the exercise found reasonable suspicion that over 600 violent incidents, most of which had multiple victims, had occurred during the ten-year civil war and each of these incidents pointed to "the possible commission of gross violations of human rights and/or international

humanitarian law." This exercise also found that foreign forces had played significant roles in many of the violent incidents.

In July 2010, the United Nations Organization and Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) replaced MONUC. The change was largely symbolic, emphasizing the political aspects of the mandate. The change also reinforced the Mission's mandate to support the DRC government and its efforts to aid in the political stabilization and peace efforts in eastern DRC following normalization of relations with its neighbors.

Even given the cooperation between MONUSCO and FARDC, many militant groups continue to perpetrate violence, especially in eastern DRC. In late 2012, M23, a group that had splintered from the formerly strong rebel group National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP), launched an offensive that led to the conquering of Goma, the provincial capital of North Kivu that lies on the border with Rwanda. Reports on M23 have tied it to Rwanda to varying degrees, though the government of Rwanda has been quick to deny these claims. While M23's occupation of Goma was brief, the Security Council still passed resolution 2076 condemning the occupation.

Following this aggression, leaders from eleven regional nations signed a Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework in early 2013 aimed at creating a lasting peace in the region. Neither M23 nor any other rebel groups were involved in the negotiations leading to this Framework. Experts have expressed doubt that the Framework will actually create the lasting peace that it aims to achieve. Shortly thereafter Bosco Ntaganda, military chief of staff from the CNDP voluntarily presented himself to the U.S. Embassy in Kigali, Rwanda, asking to be transported to the International Criminal Court to face the charges against him.

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THE SITUATION IN MALI

The Situation in Mali began in early 2012, escalated throughout the year and featured the introduction of foreign military forces in early 2013. The conflict initially began as a rebellion of Tuaregs, largely within the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) many of whom are veterans from both sides of the Libyan Civil War. Near the start of the conflict, Malian President Amadou Toumani Touré was overthrown in a coup d'état by the Malian military. The military installed Prime Minister Cheick Modibo Diarra, only to remove him in a second coup d'état in December of that same year.

The conflict between the separatist Tuaregs, who declared independence for Azawad, an area comprising approximately 60 percent of Mali, and the government of Mali began as a two-sided conflict, but over the following year, the conflict became more complicated as rebel groups fractured and other groups entered the conflict. Islamist forces also joined in the fighting, seeking to create an independent Azawad based on Sharia law. The situation spilled over the border into Algeria, with an Islamist group attacking a gas facility, taking dozens of workers hostage. This situation ended with over sixty dead.

In December 2012, the Security Council passed resolution 2085, which authorized the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) composed of neighboring nations that are

members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Following this authorization, but before AFISMA deployment, France, with help from European allies and the United States, contributed troops to assist the government of Mali. International involvement has encouraged the initial Tuareg separatists to both begin negotiations with the Malian government and fight against Islamist rebels.

Resolution 2085 was followed in April 2013 by Resolution 2100, which switched AFISMA from an African operation to the UN-led United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). MINUSMA took over on 1 July 2013. With the increase in troops from African governments, France began to withdraw its troops in April. The government of Mali has encouraged France to delay its drawdown.

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THE SITUATION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Late 2012 saw the destruction of nearly a decade of stability when a loose coalition of rebels, calling itself Séléka, began an offensive against President François Bozizé. In January 2013, the Economic Community of Central African States held peace talks that resulted in a declaration of principles, ceasefire and political agreement that has become known as the Libreville Agreements. One outcome of the agreement was a national unity government composed of members of Séléka and those loyal to President Bozizé. This government lasted a few short months; fighting quickly resumed and President Bozizé was ousted on 24 March 2013.

Michel Djotodia, who was First Deputy Prime Minister for National Defense in the unity government and a prominent leader of Séléka, declared himself President, suspended the constitution and dissolved the unity government. The African Union Peace and Security Council condemned the seizure of power, while the United Nations Security Council released a statement calling for the Libreville Agreements to continue to be the framework for a peaceful solution.

Mr. Djotodia has spent the time since then solidifying his hold on power. He initially appointed a National Transitional Council that appointed him “Head of the Transition.” The composition of this council was challenged by the Economic Community of Central African States, which called for the Council to be larger and more inclusive. The people of the Central African Republic, including members of Séléka and other opposition groups, have protested, leaving the capital city of Bangui in a state of turmoil.

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THE SITUATION IN SUDAN

The Sudanese Civil War, which ended in 2003, left two million dead, four million internally displaced, and six hundred thousand refugees. Hostilities between the Sudanese government and the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement/Army have continued. Since 2004, the United Nations Advance Mission in the Sudan has been attempting to ease tensions in the region and deal with the aftermath of the war, including the situation in Darfur. South Sudan officially became

independent on 9 July 2011; however, independence has done little to stabilize the situation in the region.

Currently there are three peacekeeping missions in the Sudan: United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), and United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). The situation on the ground has improved in Darfur, which has led to a recommendation for a UNAMID troop reduction. The security situation in Abyei has also largely improved since the deployment of UNISFA. However, while the immediate security situation has stabilized within Abyei, both Sudan and South Sudan are in direct violation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement on Temporary Security and Administrative Arrangements for the Abyei Area and have failed to remove their armed forces from Abyei. No political progress has been made toward the resolution of the final status of Abyei. The security improvements in Darfur and Abyei, however, have come at a time of increased conflict along the North-South border.

On 24 April 2012, the African Union issued a three-month deadline for resolving the long-standing disputes in the region. At its expiration the parties would be forced into binding international arbitration. Soon after, the United Nations Security Council took action on the issue, reinforcing the African Union Peace and Security Council’s roadmap for peace as well as demanding that Sudan and South Sudan address key issues of dispute: oil revenues and transit fees, status of nationals living in the other country, resolution of disputed and claimed border areas and the final status of Abyei. The UN Security Council gave these demands additional force with the threat of the use of Article 41 if the parties failed to comply.

Following the signing of a non-aggression pact at talks on outstanding secession issues and a later commitment by Sudan to pull its troops out of the border region of Abyei, negotiations were held in June 2012 in an effort to comply with the African Union roadmap and Security Council resolutions 2046 and 2047, calling for the establishment of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone (SDBZ), the formation of the Ad Hoc Committee and activation of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM). At these talks Sudan and South Sudan agreed to activate the JBVMM and to create an Ad Hoc Committee. Throughout this time, cross-border attacks continued from both sides of the border.

The parties met again in September 2012 and signed agreements that finally delineated the SDBZ and fully activated the JBVMM. Finally, the parties met again on 19 March and 22 April 2013 under the JBVMM, outlining the timeline of withdrawal of forces from the SDBZ and the control of police forces and communities on their side of the Border Zone.

Despite all of the progress through the latter part of 2012 and early 2013, some 655,000 people have been displaced by the fighting between the army and rebels in states bordering South Sudan. Even though the two states struck a last minute deal on South Sudan’s export of oil via pipelines that transect Sudan, the parties continued to accuse each other of maintaining an armed presence inside the Border Zone and clashes with rebels in Darfur and the South Kordofan region continue. The accusations culminated in Sudan informing South Sudan that it would freeze all oil and economic agreements and stop allowing oil to flow through the two export pipelines in its territory.



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THE SITUATION IN SYRIA

The unrest in the Syrian Arab Republic has continued for over two years despite attempts by the international community to quell the violence and bring about a return to normalcy for the citizens of Syria. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has reported that over 1.4 million refugees have fled Syria and 2.5 million are internally displaced.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has been in power since the death of his father in 2000. He has claimed that the opposition is largely due to enemies from outside Syria. Despite occasional signs of consolidation, the opposition has been split since just about the beginning. The

Free Syrian Army is the largest opposition military group and maintains an affiliation with the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces. Both groups are largely Sunni Muslim, which is the majority religion in Syria. Kurdish rebel groups also are fighting throughout Syria. The Kurdish people have been oppressed for many years inside Syria; many were stripped of their passports in the 1960's, forced to live as stateless people.

Thus far, the work of the Joint Special Envoy from the League of Arab States and United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has largely proven fruitless. Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan was appointed to this position on 23 February 2013. Mr. Annan introduced a six-point plan that required both sides to actively work toward peace. After the passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2043 on 21 April 2013, which established the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS), a mix of civilian and military observers entered Syria, ushering in a brief ceasefire.

By the second month of the UNSMIS deployment fighting had expanded beyond pre-ceasefire levels. UNSMIS saw its activities constantly hampered by both the government of President Bashar al-Assad and opposition forces. As the initial 90-day mandate for UNSMIS drew close to expiring with fighting only having intensified, the Security Council passed Resolution 2059, allowing UNSMIS 30 days to wind down its operations. Shortly thereafter Mr. Annan resigned from his position as Joint Special Envoy.

The second Joint Special Envoy, Lakhdar Brahimi, has had similar levels of success as his predecessor. Fighting has continued to escalate, with heavy weapons such as cluster bombs, rockets and gunships becoming de rigueur.

The latest concerns have centered upon the potential and rumored use of sarin and other chemical and biological weapons by one or both sides of the conflict. U.S. President Barack Obama stated that he had evidence that chemical weapons had been used, but that it was inconclusive as to which side had used it.

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THE SITUATION IN THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

The Korean War ended by truce, not by peace treaty, in 1953. Since that time a demilitarized zone has been in effect between the two countries. In June 2000, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea signed an accord to ease military tensions and promote economic cooperation. Cooperation has been slow, especially after an early research effort by the DPRK using uranium caused problems in 2002. At the time, the DPRK said it was only using plutonium to try to build atomic bombs. This led to the Six Party Talks in 2003, which included the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, Japan, China, Russia, and the United States. The countries involved in the Six Party Talks managed to offer the DPRK formal economic assistance in return for taking steps to end its nuclear weapons development.

Between 2006 and 2009, the DPRK launched ballistic missiles, conducted nuclear tests, announced it would begin uranium enrichment and weaponizing its plutonium stockpiles, and declared the truce that ended the Korean War void. These actions were met by increasingly more severe condemnations and sanctions by the international community and the Security Council. The DPRK complied with Security Council Resolution 1718, which condemned missile tests and demanded that the DPRK return to the Six Party Talks and retract its announcement of withdrawal from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Security Council Resolution

1874, which condemned a nuclear test and further missile launches, demanded the return of the DPRK to the NPT and the IAEA Safeguards Agreement and strengthened the sanctions imposed under Resolution 1718.

On 17 December 2011, Kim Jong-il suffered a fatal heart attack and his son Kim Jong-un was hailed as the "Great Successor." Kim Jong-un formally took over ruling party leadership in April 2012. The DPRK immediately conducted a long-range missile test, subsequently withdrawing from an agreement prohibiting such tests. In response to an October 2012 missile deal between the Republic of Korea and the United States, the DPRK announced that it had missiles that could hit the mainland of the United States and followed up this threat with a widely condemned launch that put a satellite into orbit.

On 12 February 2013, the DPRK state media announced that it had conducted an underground nuclear test, resulting in an explosion measured to be twice as large as the 2009 test. The Security Council immediately followed the test with a new range of sanctions targeting cash transfers and diplomatic travel. Further ratcheting up tensions, the DPRK announced it would respond to the new sanctions by restarting all facilities at its Yongbyon nuclear complex and withdrawing its workers from the South-Korean-funded Kaesong joint industrial park. The DPRK rejected later offers of talks to reduce tensions and described it as a "crafty trick" to disguise Seoul's hostility.

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