

EXTERNAL STUDY

Peacekeeping Operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: The Perception of the Population

(Conducted in June/July 2005)

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This study was commissioned by the Peacekeeping Best Practices Section (PBPS) of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) as part of a wider effort to measure public opinion in populations where UN peacekeeping operations are based. Its aim was to gather the public opinions of a cross section of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) regarding the work of the UN Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC, MONUC. The report was prepared by Bureau d'Etudes, de Recherches et de Consulting International (BERCI), and reflects the views of BERCI as a representation of the participants' responses to the survey questionnaire and does not necessarily represent the policies or views of PBPS or the United Nations. This report was translated from its original French text into English by Jonathan Donovan.

Please send your comments on this report to PBPS by email at Dpko-pbpuwebmaster@un.org.



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Peacekeeping Operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: The Perception of the Population

Executive Summary

A Public Opinion Survey was conducted in DRC to assess views of MONUC.

This study was carried out between the 29th June and 28th July 2005 by Bureau d'Etudes, de Recherches et de Consulting International (BERCI) at the request of the Peacekeeping Best Practices Section of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Through a survey of public opinion on a cross section of 2,810 people living in the provincial capitals of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), its aim was to gauge both the Congolese people's perception of the work of MONUC in the DRC, and also to ascertain the expectations and priorities of the population regarding peacekeeping operations. The period in which the study took place was particularly important for the ongoing peace process in the DRC because June 2005 was both the conclusion of the first section of the political transition, which should have finished with free and fair elections, and also the beginning of a one-year period of extension as required by the Constitution of the Transition and the Peace Accords. For this public opinion poll, face-to-face interviews were conducted in the homes of the interviewees who were selected using the quota method. Researchers who had received in-house training in surveying practices administered the questionnaires. The margin of error is +/- 3%.

At the time of the survey, the majority of the DRC public identified the most pressing issue as free and fair elections.

It should be noted that this study took place in a socio-political context where the majority of the population believe both that the destiny of the DRC will be decided by the Congolese (52%) and that the organization of free and fair elections is currently the most important issue (53%). Further, 43% of the population interviewed never, or only rarely feel safe, and 43% are dissatisfied with the way in which they are informed of the political situation.

Congolese perception of MONUC varied greatly amongst western and eastern provinces.

An interesting fact illuminated by this study is that the public perception of MONUC and the Blue Helmets differs according to where people live. The population of the western provinces of the country, where there is a smaller presence of MONUC, and which suffered little or no violent combat at the time of the rebellion, views MONUC in a far less positive light as compared to the eastern provinces, where MONUC has a significant presence, and there is considerable violent combat. It would seem that the 'negative' perception of MONUC in the west of the country has been caused more by a campaign of disinformation and/or rumors than by any real knowledge of the UN's mission. An effective awareness campaign could improve the situation in this part of the country. Conversely, the results indicate that in the places where the presence of MONUC has been the most concentrated, the perception of MONUC and the Blue Helmets was the most positive. Furthermore, in respect to the expectations and priorities of the population regarding peacekeeping operations, this study illustrates that for the majority of the people interviewed (60%) the UN should not be the only organization authorized to conduct peacekeeping operations. Interestingly, this opinion was observed as much

in the east as in the western provinces. Nevertheless, if the UN were unable to deploy a peacekeeping mission in the DRC, 52% of the people interviewed would prefer, as an alternative, an African force under the command of the African Union. However, the majority of the interviewees (60%) feel that even if a sub-regional peacekeeping force were to be deployed, it should not be systematically followed by a UN peacekeeping mission. The inhabitants of the western provinces were most opposed to the deployment of UN forces, while the inhabitants of the east spoke in favor of such a deployment.

REPORT ON THE FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

(Conducted in June/July 2005)

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The security situation which prevails in the east of the DRC, notably in North and South Kivu as well as in Ituri, and the conduct of the blue helmets towards the population leaves the Congolese puzzled and raises questions on their part about the role of MONUC, which will remain under the Chapter Seven Mandate, following the elections in the DRC. The findings BERCI presents in this study aim to answer these questions.

This study was carried out between the 29th June and the 28th July 2005, on a sample of 2,810 inhabitants of the provincial capitals of the DRC. For this public opinion poll, face-to-face interviews were conducted in the homes of the interviewees who were selected using the quota method. Researchers trained internally in survey methodology administered the questionnaires. Our margin of error is +/-3%.

Study Objectives

- To assess the way in which the Congolese population view the work of MONUC, the UN Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC.
- To determine the expectations and priorities of the population regarding peacekeeping operations.

Participants

Each researcher was allocated an individual quota sheet and an interview number by quota according to the commune, the town, or the village to which s/he had been assigned. In addition, every questionnaire underwent scrupulous monitoring. When these checks identified an irregularity, a second study was conducted at the site.

Checking the Researchers

A code for each researcher was included in the data in order to make it possible to screen for researchers who repeatedly came back with the same answers. When this was detected, all questionnaires conducted by such researchers were disqualified.

Where possible, the researchers were selected from the places where the survey was to be conducted in order to avoid the problem of translating local languages and to ensure a local knowledge of the terrain.

Limitations of the Study

The method of random sampling employed over-represents certain social strata and under-represents others. These biases are inherent in this method which, in a way, entrusts the researchers with the task of choosing their interviewees in the field. Certain groups or social classes are at an advantage because of their domestic situation or are more available, and therefore 'easier to interview' than other social or professional classes.

In order to minimize this bias, we gave the researchers specific instructions relative to the time and place the interviews were conducted, and we chose the biggest geographical spread in order to reach the widest social and ethnic range.

The main limitation of such a quantitative study is that it does not allow for any deep understanding of complex phenomena, qualitative methods being better suited for that kind of analysis.

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The UN mission to the DRC was created at the end of 1999 following the Lusaka Accords. At that time, the DRC was in the throes of a civil conflict that began in 1998 between the Kinshasa government, supported by the national armies of Angola, Chad, Namibia and Zimbabwe on one side, and on the other more than 20 armed groups, the most significant being the RCD supported by Rwanda and the MLC supported by Uganda. The Security Council passed a resolution deploying 90 UN Liaison Military staff members, as well as essential civilian, political, administrative and humanitarian personnel to the DRC. Their mission was to maintain relations between the different signatories of the Peace Accord. Operations that were modest to begin with rapidly gained momentum. By 30 June 2005, the mission was comprised of more than 15,946 soldiers, 175 civil policemen and 2,418 civilians. However, in a country with almost 60 million inhabitants and a surface area (2.34 million sq km) nearly 80 times the size of Belgium and 5.5 times larger than France, which shares borders with nine neighboring countries, even this force was insufficient. At the time of this report, MONUC was the largest of the seventeen UN peacekeeping missions, and with an annual budget of almost one billion US dollars, the most expensive to maintain. MONUC is authorized to act under chapter VII of the United Nations charter. Its mandate authorizes it to use all means deemed necessary, within the limits of its capabilities and areas of deployment, to discourage violence, in particular by deterring the use of force to threaten the political process, by any armed group, foreign or Congolese, but notably the ex-FAR and Interahamwe, and also to ensure the protection of civilians, including humanitarian personnel, under imminent threat of physical violence. MONUC can, in accordance with its mandate, use cordon and search tactics to prevent attacks on civilians and to weaken the capabilities of illegal armed groups which continue to use violence in the regions.¹

¹ Source : MONUC

SURVEY RESULTS

The results of this public opinion poll are displayed in the following tables and graphs. The percentages shown have been rounded to the nearest whole number or the nearest decimal point, which is the reason certain percentage totals in some tables may be 99% or 101%, rather than 100%.

Characteristics of the Respondents

CHARACTERISTICS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasai Occ.	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Number of communes	3	3	4	5	5	7	22	3	2	6	3	63
Number of respondents	290	150	290	190	210	320	500	140	190	350	180	2810
Sex												
Male	54%	54%	51%	50%	57%	53%	51%	52%	56%	57%	53%	53%
Female	49%	46%	49%	51%	43%	47%	50%	48%	44%	43%	47%	47%
Age												
Average	33	32	33	33	33	33	33	34	34	33	33	33
Minimum	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
Maximum	68	73	87	70	70	70	84	81	91	70	65	91
Civil status												
Single	40%	59%	43%	48%	25%	32%	54%	19%	44%	41%	42%	42%
Married	50%	33%	50%	45%	67%	55%	38%	72%	43%	53%	48%	49%
Divorced	10%	8%	7%	7%	8%	13%	8%	8%	13%	7%	10%	9%
Religion												
Catholic	36%	27%	38%	27%	22%	34%	31%	32%	39%	44%	48%	35%
Protestant	30%	25%	23%	33%	24%	36%	24%	26%	32%	23%	31%	27%
Kimbanguist	5%	8%	4%	3%	6%	9%	3%	5%	3%	6%	7%	5%
Muslim	4%	4%	3%	1%	10%	4%	2%	11%	11%	9%	5%	5%
Animist	1%	3%	1%	-	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Born again Christian	23%	25%	23%	36%	31%	14%	35%	23%	13%	16%	7%	23%
Others	1%	8%	9%	-	6%	3%	5%	3%	2%	2%	2%	4%
Level of Education												
Uneducated/Primary	23%	8%	15%	16%	24%	14%	12%	23%	18%	13%	17%	16%
Secondary School/College	43%	42%	48%	48%	31%	39%	64%	46%	45%	16%	52%	47%
High School	12%	10%	4%	2%	21%	15%	6%	9%	4%	8%	8%	9%
University	22%	41%	33%	34%	25%	32%	19%	22%	34%	24%	24%	28%
Profession												
Student	29%	26%	38%	43%	13%	26%	27%	24%	35%	35%	30%	30%
Scientific professional	9%	3%	4%	-	10%	7%	2%	5%	12%	8%	15%	6%
Self Employed professional	6%	19%	5%	-	11%	23%	15%	7%	13%	10%	13%	11%
Director/Administrative officer	3%	1%	6%	5%	5%	3%	1%	6%	3%	2%	3%	3%
Personnel commercial activities	13%	8%	8%	10%	9%	8%	11%	9%	9%	13%	9%	10%
Specialist worker	1%	2%	5%	28%	7%	4%	6%	5%	4%	6%	6%	6%
Cultivator/Fisherman/Herdsman	25%	11%	21%	7%	15%	19%	2%	38%	8%	17%	13%	15%
Factory worker/Conductor/Laborer	10%	23%	12%	1%	29%	7%	6%	2%	14%	8%	10%	10%
Administrative personnel	4%	7%	4%	5%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	-	3%
Other profession	-	0%	-	3%	-	-	29%	2%	-	0%	-	5%
Are you head of the household?												
Yes	45%	32%	58%	26%	62%	45%	32%	58%	43%	53%	44%	45%
No	55%	68%	42%	74%	39%	55%	68%	42%	57%	47%	56%	55%
Gender of head of household												
Male	84%	52%	74%	83%	74%	86%	78%	80%	83%	80%	78%	79%
Female	16%	48%	26%	17%	26%	14%	22%	20%	17%	20%	22%	22%

Political Context

Table 1 : Who do you think controls the destiny of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equator	Kasai Occ.	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
The Congolese themselves	73%	64%	36%	42%	60%	38%	49%	71%	66%	65%	60%	55%
The Western powers	5%	5%	13%	17%	5%	29%	7%	8%	15%	7%	12%	11%
God	21%	30%	50%	40%	32%	32%	43%	21%	20%	27%	28%	33%
Others	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 2 : Are you satisfied with the way that you receive information about the country's political situation and the upcoming elections? (The following table shows the percentage of respondents who answered yes)

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equator	Kasai Occ.	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Political Situation	30%	32%	40%	30%	34%	57%	47%	29%	51%	50%	45%	43%
Electoral process	37%	57%	64%	20%	36%	59%	46%	61%	66%	71%	63%	53%

Table 3 : How do you feel about the state of the DRC since its reunification in June 2003? Has it:

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasai Occ.	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Improved	17%	11%	18%	3%	9%	17%	14%	72%	41%	53%	37%	25%
Deteriorated	44%	40%	34%	46%	34%	28%	46%	12%	11%	11%	26%	32%
Has not changed/No opinion	39%	49%	48%	52%	57%	56%	40%	16%	48%	36%	37%	43%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 4 : Which of the following issues do you feel is of most concern to you? :

ISSUES	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasaï Occ.	Kasaï Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
The economic crisis	31%	43%	40%	20%	20%	39%	42%	28%	19%	31%	26%	33%
The political/institutional crisis	13%	12%	14%	14%	17%	9%	19%	15%	20%	12%	21%	15%
The organization of free and fair elections	56%	45%	46%	65%	63%	53%	39%	57%	61%	57%	54%	53%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 5 : In your opinion, are human rights respected in your province? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasaï Occ.	Kasaï Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Yes	11%	8%	9%	7%	10%	26%	10%	14%	5%	11%	6%	11%
No	89%	92%	91%	93%	90%	74%	90%	86%	95%	89%	94%	89%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 6 : Do you feel safe in your daily life? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasaï Occ.	Kasaï Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Always	10%	11%	10%	16%	3%	7%	15%	7%	2%	10%	2%	9%
Often/Sometimes	41%	55%	32%	46%	30%	59%	43%	68%	57%	56%	46%	47%
Rarely	14%	14%	20%	19%	8%	16%	16%	10%	22%	20%	16%	16%
Never	35%	26%	38%	20%	60%	18%	25%	13%	19%	14%	35%	27%
No response	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The Perception of MONUC

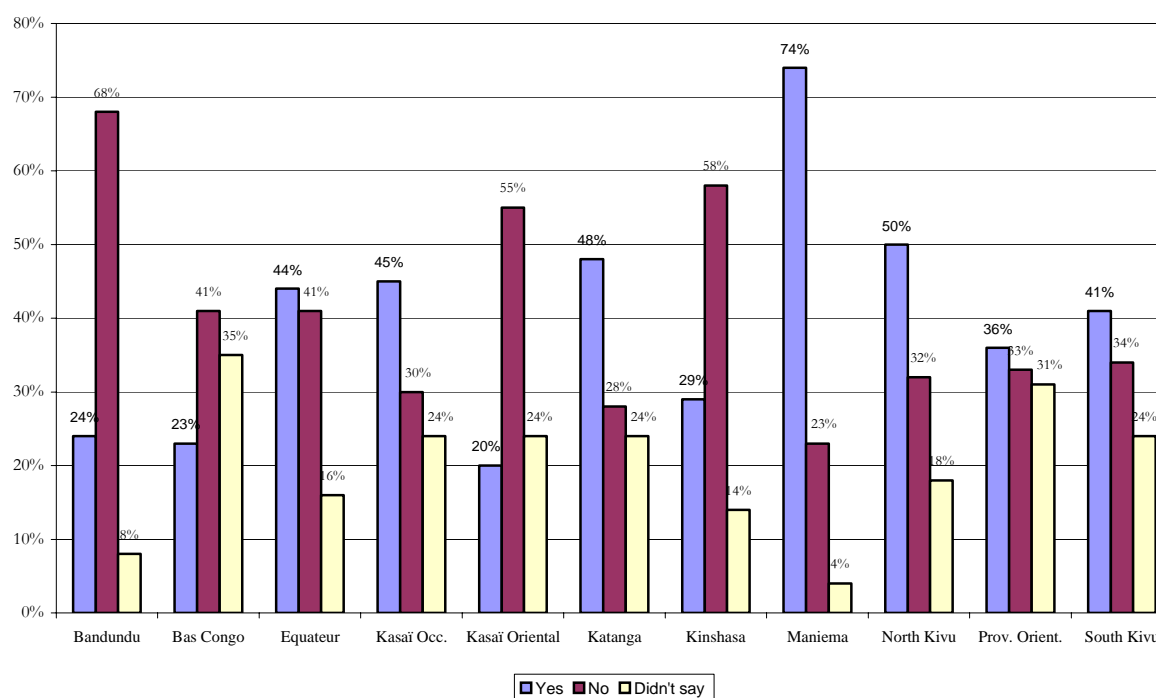
The population has offered its opinion on the presence of MONUC. On the issue of security, a large portion of the population, or 43%, say they still do not feel safe, whereas 37% do, and 20% are undecided. This question should be looked at together with the question presented in the political context relating to people's sense of security, which indicates that as a general rule, 43% of the population feels safe only rarely or never in the DRC.

Table 7: Does the presence of MONUC make you feel safer? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasaï Occ.	Kasaï Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Yes	24%	23%	44%	45%	20%	48%	29%	74%	50%	36%	41%	37%
No	68%	41%	41%	30%	55%	28%	58%	23%	32%	33%	34%	43%
No response	8%	35%	16%	24%	24%	24%	14%	4%	18%	31%	24%	20%

It is interesting that the respondents in the provinces where MONUC has a more significant presence felt most strongly that the existence of MONUC provided them with a sense of security. This can be seen in the eastern provinces, notably Katanga (48% - yes, 28% - no), Maniema (74% - yes, 23% - no), North Kivu (50% - yes, 32% - no), South Kivu (41% - yes, 34% - no), and Orientale (36% - yes, 33% - no). In the western provinces however, the feeling that the presence of MONUC made people feel safer is noticeably less, except in Equateur where respondents answered yes (44%) only slightly more than they did no (41%). In Bas Congo, 41% answered no and 23% said yes, in Bandundu, 68% of respondents said no and only 24% said yes, and in Kinshasa 58% said no and 29% said yes. For the inhabitants of both provinces of Kasai, only those in Kasai Occidental felt the presence of MONUC made them feel safer with 45% of respondents answering yes and 30% no, whereas for Kasai Oriental, those who said no totaled 55% with only 20% responding yes.

Figure 1: A provincial breakdown of where MONUC's presence provides people with a sense of security.



The majority of all respondents interviewed (62% to 38%) said MONUC troops behave with respect towards the population. Again, this opinion is strongest felt in the eastern provinces, but also in Bas Congo, Kinshasa, and Kasai Oriental. Only in the provinces of Bandundu and Kasai Occidental did the majority of respondents say that MONUC troops did not act with respect towards the local population.

Table 8: Do the UN troops act with respect towards the local population? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasai Occ.	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Yes	37%	59%	90%	49%	55%	56%	52%	76%	74%	65%	82%	62%
No	63%	41%	10%	51%	45%	44%	48%	24%	26%	35%	18%	38%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The following table shows the public's perception of the Blue Helmet's professional conduct. In the country as a whole, most people interviewed said the level of professionalism displayed was quite good (51%) whereas 28% of respondents said it was bad/very bad and 22% thought it was excellent/very good. This negative perception was observed more in the western provinces, notably Bandundu and Bas Congo where respondents opted for 60% and 39% respectively (Bad/Very bad) to describe the Blue Helmet's professional conduct. Some peculiarities were observed in the results from Kinshasa where 38% found the Blue Helmets' conduct to be bad/very bad and 46% found it to be quite good. In Kasai Oriental, the 45% of respondents who said the Blue Helmet's conduct was quite good were only slightly more than the 41% who said it was bad/very bad. These results conform to the results illustrated below which show that a vast majority (83%) of the population feels that the professional conduct of the Blue Helmets is quite good, or very good/excellent.

Table 9: How would you describe the professional conduct of the Blue helmets?

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasai Occ.	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Excellent/Very good	19%	24%	38%	21%	14%	24%	16%	34%	28%	16%	17%	22%
Quite good	21%	36%	48%	61%	45%	64%	46%	52%	54%	63%	70%	51%
Bad/Very bad	60%	39%	13%	18%	41%	12%	38%	13%	18%	21%	12%	28%
Total	100%	99%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	100%	99%	101%

Although the conduct of the Blue Helmets may be viewed by some as being good, it seems that a large part of the population (60%) feel that MONUC has remained long enough in the DRC, while 40% feel it should remain for longer. Only in the province of Katanga did the majority (65%) of respondents say that MONUC should remain longer in the DRC. The provinces where people were most eagerly awaiting the departure of MONUC are, in order, Kasai Oriental (77%), Bandundu (75%), Oriental Province (70%), Bas Congo (65%), Kinshasa (64%) and South Kivu (61%).

Table 10: Do you feel MONUC has stayed long enough in the DRC or should they remain longer? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasai Occ.	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
MONUC has stayed long enough in the DRC	75%	65%	55%	54%	77%	35%	64%	52%	55%	70%	61%	60%
MONUC should remain longer in the DRC	25%	35%	45%	46%	23%	65%	36%	48%	45%	30%	39%	40%

MONUC was created to support the peace process in the DRC. An important part of its mandate is, among other things, to discourage violence, in particular by deterring the use of force to threaten the political process, and to ensure the protection of civilians. When asked whether MONUC ever went beyond the duties of its mandate to help the local population, 41% of respondents said MONUC had not and 33% expressed that MONUC had, often, gone beyond their normal duties to help. Kasai Occidental was most negative on this issue with 55% of respondents answering no followed by North Kivu (51%), then Equateur with (50%).

Table 11: Have the MONUC troops ever gone beyond the duties of their mandate to help you? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasai Occ.	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Yes	55%	14%	50%	20%	23%	35%	25%	65%	27%	21%	29%	33%
No	33%	44%	27%	55%	45%	34%	50%	23%	51%	39%	40%	41%
No response	12%	41%	23%	26%	32%	31%	25%	12%	22%	40%	31%	27%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

In response to the question of whether the UN should be the only organization authorized to conduct peacekeeping operations in the DRC, table 12 illustrates that 60% of respondents believe this should not be the case. This opinion was most strongly felt in the province of Bandundu (83%), South Kivu (75%) and in Maniema (53%). In the province of Equateur, 36% of respondents said the UN should be the only organization authorized to conduct peacekeeping operations in the DRC, followed closely by Katanga (30%). In the case that the UN is unable to deploy a peacekeeping mission in the future, 52% of respondents said they would prefer, as an alternative, an African peacekeeping force commanded by the African Union. Where as 28% of respondents said that neither a sub-regional nor an African peace keeping force under AU command would be up to the task of keeping the peace in the DRC (See Table 16).

Table 12: Should the UN be the only organization authorized to keep the peace in the DRC? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasai Occ.	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Yes	6%	22%	36%	12%	20%	30%	23%	28%	25%	18%	14%	22%
No	83%	50%	48%	56%	56%	59%	58%	60%	59%	53%	75%	60%
No response	11%	28%	16%	32%	24%	12%	18%	11%	16%	29%	10%	19%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 13: Should the UN be unable to retain a peacekeeping force in the DRC, who should take their place? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasai Occ.	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
A sub-regional peacekeeping force	16%	20%	13%	40%	12%	29%	17%	15%	18%	20%	23%	20%
An African peacekeeping contingent commanded by the African Union	65%	38%	39%	48%	55%	48%	59%	57%	55%	51%	54%	52%
Neither	19%	42%	48%	11%	33%	23%	24%	28%	27%	29%	23%	28%
Total	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The majority of those interviewed (60%) feel that if a sub-regional force were deployed in the DRC, it would not have to be followed systematically by the deployment of a UN mission. Bandundu (92%), Kasai Occidental (85%), and Kasai Oriental (73%) are the provinces most unfavorable to the deployment of UN forces, while Maniema, Katanga and Orientale Province have come out in favor of a redeployment of UN troops.

Table 14: If a Sub-regional/African Peacekeeping force was deployed in the DRC, should it be systematically followed by a UN peacekeeping mission? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasaï Occ.	Kasaï Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Yes	8%	35%	41%	15%	27%	55%	49%	64%	45%	52%	43%	40%
No	92%	65%	59%	85%	73%	45%	51%	36%	55%	48%	57%	60%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

When asked about the Human Rights situation in the DRC, almost a third of respondents (32%) said MONUC has made no contribution. This opinion is most strongly felt in Bandundu, Kasaï Oriental, Kinshasa, Kasaï Occidental, Equateur, Maniema, South Kivu, Bas Congo, and in Orientale Province. However, in Katanga, a large section of the population (28%) said MONUC had contributed towards keeping the peace and reunifying the country. In North Kivu, 20% of respondents singled out respect for principles of non-violence as the greatest contribution made by MONUC.

Table 15: What kind of impact has MONUC had, until now, on the human rights situation in the DRC? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasaï Occidental	Kasaï Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Nothing/No impact	58%	20%	28%	37%	47%	15%	41%	27%	18%	19%	26%	32%
Keeping the peace and reunifying the country	18%	19%	13%	5%	12%	28%	14%	6%	17%	11%	7%	15%
Building respect for the principles of non-violence	1%	8%	14%	6%	12%	10%	5%	18%	20%	12%	12%	10%
Protecting people and their property	9%	8%	7%	1%	1%	18%	6%	8%	15%	12%	7%	9%
Not respecting human rights			2%	16%	3%			8%	2%	2%	7%	3%
A weak contribution			3%	7%	4%	2%	1%		1%	2%	2%	2%
Surveillance of the DRC's borders	0%	1%	1%	1%		1%	1%		1%	0%	1%	1%
Disturbances and insecurity	2%	2%	4%	1%		1%	0%		1%			1%
Helps and supports the population			1%			0%	0%	8%	3%	2%	5%	1%
According people dignity	1%		1%			3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%
The end of sexual violence in the east			1%		2%	1%					2%	0%
The demobilization of child soldiers						3%	0%			2%	1%	1%
Plundering of our natural resources	5%				3%		0%					1%
The creation of Radio OKAPI		1%	3%							4%	2%	1%
Reducing levels of un-employment		1%	1%				1%			0%		0%
Protecting the Rwandans and brutal Leaders		1%					2%		1%	0%		0%
No opinion	6%	40%	21%	26%	16%	19%	28%	25%	20%	33%	26%	23%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

According to half the respondents, the departure of MONUC might lead to greater national insecurity and bring about a return to war. Only in the western provinces, specifically Bandundu, Kasai Occidental and Bas Congo was this not a major concern. Respondents in Bandundu, Kasai Occidental and Bas Congo thought the departure of MONUC might have no consequences. Across the country, others perceived consequences might be; political chaos, a diminution in the plundering of the country's mineral resources, the failure to hold elections, unemployment, human rights violations, a decrease in prostitution, a new conflict between the DRC and its eastern neighbors, etc.

Table 16: What do you think would happen if MONUC left the DRC? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasai Occidental	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
National insecurity/War	28%	34%	46%	56%	25%	81%	44%	69%	60%	49%	65%	50%
There would be no consequences	66%	37%	31%	15%	56%	7%	34%	19%	20%	22%	24%	31%
Political Chaos	0%	2%	1%	1%		4%	3%	1%	7%	3%	3%	2%
Less plundering of natural resources	1%	1%		19%		2%	1%					2%
Failure to hold elections			1%				1%	5%	2%	0%		1%
Unemployment			1%				1%	1%	0%	5%	1%	1%
Conflict between the DRC and its eastern neighbors			0%	1%		3%	1%		3%	0%		1%
No more means of communication			10%									1%
A decrease in prostitution	0%		0%	1%		0%	0%			1%		0%
Human rights violations				1%	2%	0%			1%	1%		0%
Doesn't know	5%	26%	10%	7%	17%	3%	15%	5%	7%	20%	7%	11%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

When asked about the conflict in the east between Rwandan troops and Interahamwe militias and the role which MONUC could or should play in bringing it to an end, 29% of respondents, on a national level thought MONUC should remove them from Congolese territory, 9% wished for MONUC to restore peace to the whole country, another 9% said MONUC should disarm them. Nevertheless, 11% consider MONUC incapable, and said there was nothing they could do to resolve the conflict. This belief was strongest felt in the provinces of Bandundu (23%), Kasai Oriental (17%), Equateur (13%), Bas Congo (12%) and in Kinshasa (12%). Other tasks expected of MONUC were, most notably, that they should fight the Rwandans, that they should bring them to the negotiating table, secure the national borders, make a decision against the Rwandans, arrest and try them in the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, accord them Congolese nationality, support the electoral process and integration of a national army, or create a neutral zone along the Rwanda-Congolese border. A minority of those interviewed went as far as to say that MONUC could achieve nothing because it was taking advantage of the war in the DRC in order to commit acts of plunder itself.

Table 17: How do you think MONUC could put an end to the conflict between the Rwandans and the Interahamwe in eastern Congo? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasai Occidental	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Maniema	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
They should get out of the DRC	8%	12%	34%	9%	48%	34%	26%	54%	41%	24%	37%	29%
Nothing (they are incapable)	23%	12%	13%	5%	17%	8%	12%	4%	11%	10%	6%	11%
MONUC should bring peace To the whole country	13%	4%	9%	11%	5%	14%	15%	2%	1%	10%	1%	9%
Disarm the Interahamwe		24%	5%	15%		10%	3%	12%	20%	14%	11%	9%
They should fight the Rwandans	4%	4%	4%	19%	2%	2%	7%	12%	3%	9%	36%	8%
MONUC should bring them To the negotiating table	0%	5%	4%		4%	15%	9%	10%	12%	7%	5%	7%
The Americans know exactly what is needed to end it	2%	3%	5%	2%	4%	1%	3%		3%	5%	1%	3%
Control the borders more effectively	0%	4%	2%	12%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%		2%
Make a decision against the Rwandans	0%	2%		2%			3%		3%	3%	1%	1%
Arrest all of them and bring Them before the ICTR			0%	15%	1%		1%		0%	0%		1%
Create a neutral Zone on the Rwanda-Congolese border	0%	1%	0%			1%	2%		1%	0%		1%
This war is profitable to them to the extent as it enables them to plunder	8%				1%		1%		2%	3%		1%
Support the electoral process and the integration of the national army			0%		1%	1%	1%		0%	0%		0%
Give them Congolese nationality						1%			0%	0%		0%
No opinion	40%	29%	24%	10%	20%	12%	19%	6%	2%	13%	4%	17%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The perception of MONUC's contribution towards local development varies from east to west. In the eastern provinces, except for a small divergence in Orientale Province, the respondents affirmed that MONUC contributed towards local development in their area. This was not the case for the western provinces of Bas Congo, Bandundu and Kinshasa. The majority of respondents in the two provinces of Kasai also said MONUC did not participate in their local development. In Equateur, however, 52% of those interviewed said MONUC did participate in their local development

Table 18: In your opinion does MONUC contribute towards local development in your area? :

OPINIONS	Bandundu	Bas Congo	Equateur	Kasai Occ.	Kasai Oriental	Katanga	Kinshasa	Manicma	North Kivu	Prov. Orient.	South Kivu	Total
Yes	24%	16%	52%	23%	17%	40%	19%	84%	52%	36%	45%	34%
No	71%	48%	36%	52%	63%	35%	66%	15%	35%	38%	36%	48%
No response	6%	36%	12%	25%	20%	25%	16%	1%	13%	25%	19%	18%
Total	101%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the period between 29th June and 28th July, the *Bureau d'Etudes, de Recherches and Consulting International* sent teams of researchers to all 11 provincial capitals of the DRC in order to assess the way in which the population felt on a number of pressing current issues, mainly their perception of MONUC, the UN mission to the DRC. The results obtained by this opinion poll illustrate that there is great disparity regarding the perception of MONUC between the provinces in the east and the west, and also those in the center of the country, specifically the Province of Bandundu.

This study illustrates that the population in the east is, to a large extent, in favor of the presence of MONUC troops, unlike the population in the west. This could be explained by the fact that MONUC is working not only to maintain peace and security, but also to defend human rights. This conclusion can be drawn from the questions inquiring about the wider contribution MONUC has made in the DRC, where, although a significant section of the population says MONUC has had no impact, another section spoke of MONUC's valid contribution to keeping the peace and reunifying the country, building respect for the principles of non-violence, and ensuring security for people and their property. The people from these provinces also recognize that MONUC has contributed towards their local development. However, the positive perception of MONUC in the east contrasts with people's perception in the western provinces, in Bandundu and Bas Congo in particular, where the public opinion of MONUC is largely negative. This negativity was also observed in Kinshasa and in both provinces of Kasai, with few differences over certain questions. Take the example of Bandundu where 68% of the population say they do not feel safe even with the presence of MONUC, 63% say MONUC troops do not act with respect towards the local population, 60% feel the professional conduct of the Blue Helmets is bad/very bad, 75% feel MONUC has stayed too long in the Congo, 83% believe the UN should not be the only organization authorized to keep the peace, 92% feel that if a sub-regional force were deployed, it should not be followed by UN forces, 58% say that MONUC has made no impact in the field of human rights, 66% feel that there would be no negative consequences resulting from the departure of MONUC, 73% feel that MONUC can do nothing to put an end to the conflict in the east between Rwandans and the Interahamwe, and 71% say MONUC does not contribute towards their local development.

The hostility expressed by the population of Bandundu towards the UN mission could be explained by the fact that this population feels unaffected by the war, and that they have other more pressing social problems that need resolving. For them, MONUC should be deployed in the east to help the population there. We encountered a similar attitude amongst this population in a survey we conducted earlier this year in February 2005.

In conclusion, it is interesting that this study indicates that except for the province of Bandundu and some isolated cases in Kinshasa, Bas Congo, and the two provinces of Kasai, the presence of MONUC is widely perceived as a solution to the prevailing security and humanitarian concerns which continue to affect the other provinces of the DRC.