



# UNPOLICE

## Flash

### ELECTIONS SECURITY IN THE DRC:

#### UNPOL DETERMINED TO PLAY ITS PART IN THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

*« “Minimize the number of victims of electoral violence”, this is the objective of MONUSCO Police. To achieve this, the Component has made a diagnosis without complacency of the prevailing situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Police Commissioner, General Pascal CHAMPION, personally presided, for three days running, at what he termed “an enlarged Senior Management Team meeting” including all Unit and Section Heads as well as Chiefs of Sectors, Sub-Sectors and Antennas..*

A Three-day seminar on elections security in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) opened at Linda Hotel in Goma on Tuesday 25th August 2015. The Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations in the DRC, Mr. Martin Kobler arrived before the scheduled opening and addressed participants for ten minutes. Mr. Kobler thanked the Leadership of the Police Component for choosing a topic of current interest and for anticipating by organizing this seminar which will contribute in the protection of the civilian population. He enjoined



the Police Commissioner of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Congo (MONUSCO) General Pascal CHAMPION to intensify the partnership with the Congolese National Police.

He added that this seminar was coming at a time when MONUSCO was undergoing transformations brought about by the necessity to prepare for the Mission’s exit strategy. These transformations will affect all the Components, he said. The strength of the Force will decrease while that of the Police will increase. “Police Officers, you are the future of the United Nations’ engagement in Congo” he said. The exit paradigm has changed. The neutralization of armed groups is almost completed and the SRSG thinks that the new

challenge is the dismantling of criminal networks, and this is the domain of the Police. Coming back to elections security, the SRSG said it was timely because “measures should be taken before demonstrations to check violence”. This seminar is not an indication that Congo is drifting towards violence, rather it is the natural job of all police services that give priority to preventive action. Violence often comes in because incumbents have the tendency to stay in power while the opposition wants them out. This is the reality, be it in Congo, France, Germany or Senegal, he said.

Mr. Kobler used the occasion to address a topic of prime importance to him and above all, to the United Nations Secretary General, “Sexual Exploitation and Abuse”. He said they were at their fourth day of sensitization campaign on the topic in the provinces. The sensitive nature of the topic can be measured through the dismissal of the SRSG in the Central African Republic following the rape of three women, bringing the number to 57 rape cases by Peace Keepers in that country since the start of this year, he said. “The number of cases in MONUSCO stand at 8, but we cannot neglect this number because any single case is an intolerable case, and we cannot pride ourselves for having just 8 cases. The MONUSCO SRSG called on all the personnel of the United Nations “to respect the ban on sexual relations with Congolese”. We are here to protect civilians and we must respect the rules of discipline and conduct of the United Nations because Sexual Exploitation and Abuse tarnish the image of our Institution, he said.

Coming back to the topic of the day he reiterated his thanks to the Police Commissioner for organizing this seminar while looking forward to expected results, before departing.

The opening ceremony continued with General Pascal CHAMPION taking the floor to welcome participants to the three-day seminar devoted to actions that can be taken to limit the number of victims of electoral violence in the next 18 months. He said he was honored by the massive presence of invitees, proof of the pertinence of the topic.

He revisited the tour with the Special Representative of the Secretary General aimed at sensitizing the entire personnel of MONUSCO on the zero tolerance policy in matters of Sexual exploitation and abuse. He said “the SRSG has met with hundreds of supervisors and personnel of MONUSCO, accompanied by the Force Commander, the Mission Chief of Staff and the Police Commissioner, to discuss in an open and convincing manner, the issue of sexual violence. He indicated that just as the seminar, the tour is intended to protect civilians; all UN personnel must do their best to discard any behavior that might jeopardize the protection of the local population”.

For General Pascal CHAMPION, electoral violence is related to the protection of civilians. The protection of civilians is the most important mission. It is also a major responsibility of the United Nations (UN). It is for this reason that in 2014, the Secretary General launched the “Rights up front” initiative, requiring that every UN personnel should do all in his power to protect a person in danger. “Do not ask questions, act”.



Talking about the objective of the seminar he said “from a police standpoint, the Democratic Republic of Congo is moving towards provincial, urban, municipal, local, legislative and presidential elections ridden with potential threats.

As Police Officers, we cannot wait for these threats to be concretized. We have to prepare ourselves to face eventual violence in case of large scale demonstrations so as to limit the loss of human lives, the wounded and destruction of private and public property”. This seminar will equally contribute in the supporting the Congolese National Police whose primary duty it is to secure elections.

Taking the floor next was the North Kivu Provincial Commissioner, General AWACHANGO Vital who thanked General CHAMPION for the laudable initiative, proof of his determination to support the Congolese National Police and beyond that, the Democratic Republic of Congo during this very important process for his country, before wishing an excellent seminar to participants.

After the phase of speeches, the pride of place for the first presentation went to General Pascal CHAMPION on the theme “UNPOL action for the protection of civilians against electoral violence in the DRC”. Throughout his presentation, he did not only highlight the importance of the protection of civilians, but also his concern in seeing a reduction in the number of deaths and wounded during upcoming elections. He also expressed the wish to witness a

further downward trend recalling that during the 2006 and 2011 elections, the number of victims dropped from several thousands to a few hundreds in the last election.

Next was the elections Focal Point in the UNPOL Headquarters whose presentation centered on UNPOL actions in line with UN rules. The 2013 Directive of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and of the Department of Field Support (DFS) on the support to the United Nations Police measures aimed at securing electoral processes and the 2015 DPKO/DFS policy on the protection of civilians in Peacekeeping Operations were presented to participants.

Speaking next, the elections Focal Point based in Kinshasa made a presentation was on “UNPOL action in the Congolese organization of elections security”. He underscored the duties that await UNPOL throughout the electoral process. The Head of the Strategic Planning Unit on his part demonstrated the transversal nature of the structures involved in the organization of elections security, notably the joint coordination mechanisms in MONUSCO.

On the second day, the Chief of Operations did a presentation on “Risks, threats and the various scenarios” He presented the possible political situations that could come up concerning the candidature or not of the incumbent Head of State and their consequences on the security of upcoming elections. Each scenario, he went on, calls for appropriate actions to protect the population. While appreciating the quality of this presentation, participants did not fail to request the list of actions to be carried out for each scenario.

The Chief of Formed Police Units (FPU) coordination Office enlightened participants on the missions of the FPUs within the scope of the electoral process. He listed the actions to be carried out, beginning with prevention to



determine the threat, to the protection of civilians, UN personnel and installations. Participants brought out the limits of UNPOL in the protection of civilians in the question and answer session that followed.

The UNPOL Chief of Staff disclosed that the Component, thanks to its restructuring is preparing to respond to all eventualities during the electoral process through redeployments and logistical support.

This was followed by a presentation on the peculiar situation of Kinshasa by the Chief of

Reform, Restructuring and Development. Besides being the capital, it is the largest francophone city with over 10 million inhabitants and the absence a UNPOL Sector. Talking about UNPOL action in the capital, he identified five, namely: the protection of personnel, capacity building, support, monitoring and advising. As shortcomings, he mentioned the low UNPOL staffing, (deficit of 30 UNPOLs, one FPU) with only 11 vehicles of which 4 will be withdrawn because they have exceeded their lifespan in the UN system.

In the afternoon, the Training Coordinator focused on training and elections security. He demonstrated how UNPOL could help the Congolese National Police to manage the electoral process democratically and professionally. He revealed the engagement of UNPOL to train over 10.000 police officers through capacity building in public order

management and Human Rights. Participants raised the problem of allowances for trainers and PNC officers taking part in these training courses.

Then followed the Deputy Police Commissioner, Colonel Tabasky DIOUF who dwelled on the draft UNPOL operational Directive which will be signed in application of the “Joint Mission Plan for Elections Security” that was signed by the SRSG and published on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015. This Directive, according the Colonel, has as global objective the security of elections in order to protect civilians, UN staff and installations. Other related aspects such as good offices of the SRSG or logistical support will be handled separately if necessary. This Directive, he said, is not contrary to the primary responsibility of the government of the DRC to ensure the security of its population, as well as UN personnel and installations. He went on to enumerate the tasks assigned to UNPOL amongst which we can mention, the direction and coordination by the Police Commissioner, training and capacity building, support to the PNC to enable them ensure the security of elections in conformity with international norms and the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP), the submission, after an understanding with the PNC, to the Director of Mission Support of a global plan comprising the logistical, training and capacity building needs.

In a second presentation titled “Sensitive, delicate and complex UNPOL Actions necessitating thorough UNPOL reflection”, Colonel Tabasky DIOUF identified 10 domains which according to him require special attention from the Leadership of the Police Component: advocacy for the mobilization of MONUSCO and financial and technical partners for support in training and equipment of the PNC, the necessity to extend training and sensitization to PNC command staff so as to bring them to adopt the “principle of the Commander’s responsibility”, coordination with the PNC, coordination with the Force and UNDSS in the protection of personnel and installation and property of MONUSCO, coordination with DMS, JOC, Political Affairs, Civil Affairs, JHRO, Offices, Sub Offices, Integrated Offices/DSRSG/RC/HC, the deployment of FPU or detachments of FPU, brainstorming on circumstances that could warrant such deployments, objectives to be determined to avoid overestimation of capacities of detachments, amongst others.

In the morning of the last day, participants were edified on the new SOP on Human Rights Due Diligence Policy. The presenter recalled that the respect for Human Rights remains a condition for all support from the United Nations.



This was followed by a presentation from the Chief of the Strategic Planning Unit who revisited the 2006 and 2011 elections. He said 2006 was characterized by thousands of deaths in a transitional context with a Police ill prepared to face the security challenges as a result of lack of training and low academic level of its officers.

In 2011, MONUSCO brought in its contribution by training 6 battalions of the LNI and monitoring officers, he said.

After his exposé, the Deputy Police Commissioner took the floor to talk about colocation. He said following the exit strategy, colocation should be the best way to optimize the contribution of Sectors and Sub-Sectors to the professional capacity building of PNC Units. For

this to happen, he reiterated the need to raise UNPOL strength to 600 and adequate logistical support. These concerns should be addressed in the 2016/2017 budget.

The fourth presenter came back on the sensitization against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. The Head of the Conduct and Discipline Unit, just as the SRSG and the Police Commissioner on the first day, sensitized seminar participants on the necessity to follow laid down rules strictly. He declared that all fraternization with Congolese was forbidden except within the professional framework. Answering a question from the Deputy Police Commissioner on the legal bases of a decision more constraining than that of the Secretary General of the United Nations in his 2003

bulletin, he said with examples that each Head of Mission is free to take measures in his area of responsibility to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse.

The Chief of Staff concluded the morning with a presentation of the work plan that each UNPOL must make to indicate what contribution he/she intends to make in the Mission and on the basis of which he will be evaluated.

The afternoon was reserved for questions on all the topics treated in three days.

In his closing remarks, the Police Commissioner did not only thank all the presenters for the quality of their exposés, but also participants for their enriching contributions and questions. He recalled that the topic is of interest both to UNPOL and its PNC partner who has prepared a similar document. He invited all UNPOLs to be conscious of the work that awaits the Police Component, while “being optimistic and confident”.

General AWACHANGO reiterated his thanks expressed during the opening ceremony, saying General CHAMPION's engagement with the PNC is known by all, and through him, the entire Police component. In his capacity as the North Kivu Provincial Commissioner, he recalled the training of 400 PNC Officers in February and the ongoing training of 450 others. These training sessions, he said, will enable North Kivu PNC to harmonize and have a common vision on elections security, thus help us to reduce to number of victims.

