



**UNITED NATIONS JOINT HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE IN THE DRC
(UNJHRO)
MONUSCO – OHCHR**

Analysis of the human rights situation between January and June 2021

Introduction

1. The United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO) is composed of the Human Rights Division of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Its mandate includes assisting the DRC Government in the promotion and protection of human rights through the efforts of its antennas and field offices¹ as well as headquarters in Kinshasa. This report is based on information collected by UNJHRO and only includes human rights violations documented and confirmed by UNJHRO. The information contained in this report is shared with provincial and national Congolese authorities for their action.

Main trends in human rights violations

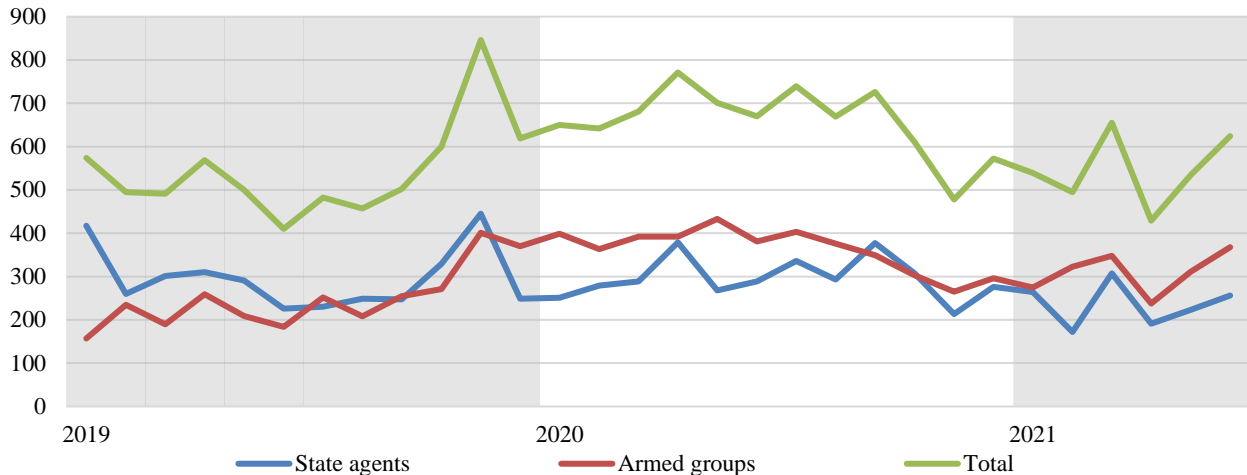
2. The UNJHRO documented 3,276 human rights violations and abuses throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the first half of 2021², an average of 546 per month. Overall, this represents a decrease of 14% compared to the previous six months (July-December 2020) and of 20% compared to the same period last year (January-June 2020). The decrease in the number of human rights violations and abuses observed throughout the country during this six-month period compared to the same period the previous year³ reflects a decrease of the number of violations attributable to State agents (-19%) and abuses by armed groups (-21%), which indicates an improvement of the human rights situation in the provinces affected by conflict, with a particularly significant decrease in the number of violations documented in the provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri and Kasai.

¹ Following the closure of some MONUSCO offices and antennas, which was completed in June 2019, the number of operational offices was reduced from 18 to 12.

² The figures mentioned in this report do not reflect the complete overview of the human rights violations in the DRC. They only relate to the cases documented and verified by UNJHRO during the period under review. It is also possible that these figures include human rights violations committed during the previous period but brought to the attention of UNJHRO during the first half of 2021. Statistics regarding the number of violations reported may increase or decrease over a given period due to numerous factors outside the control and/or knowledge of UNJHRO and must therefore be used with caution.

³ Between January and June 2020, the UNJHRO had documented 4.115 violations, an average of 686 violations per month and an increase compared to the previous period (3,309 violations had been documented between January and June 2019, an average of 551 violations per month).

Trends in human right violations since January 2019

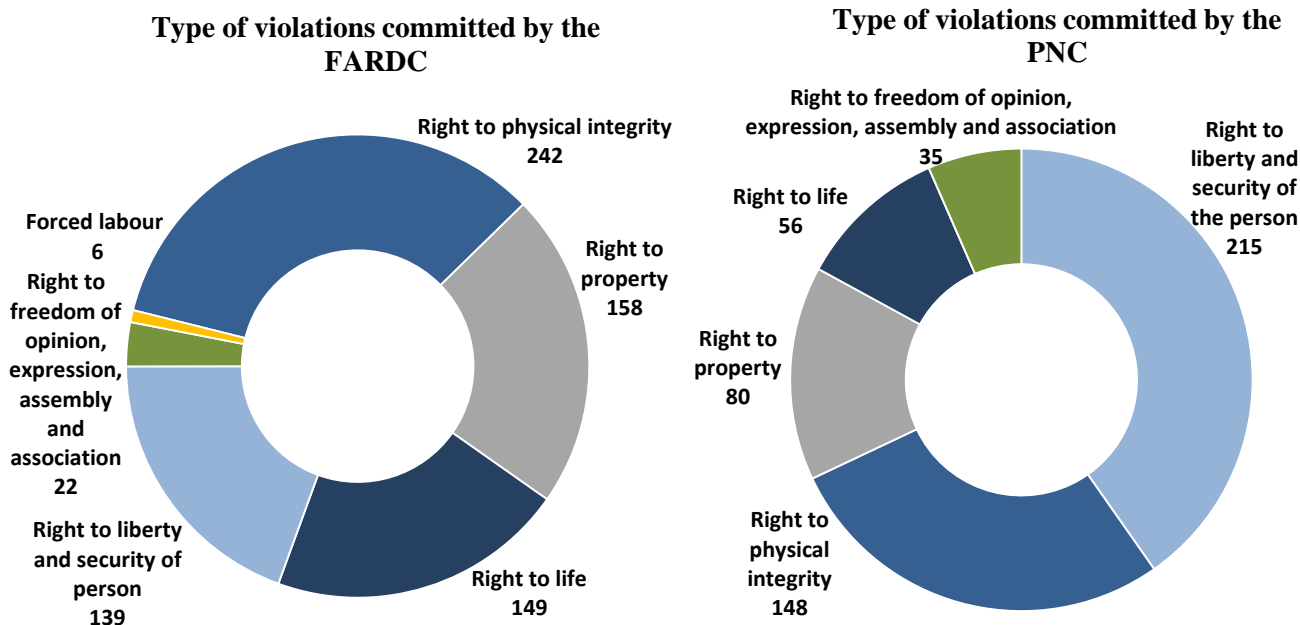


3. Nearly 43% of the violations documented in the first half of 2021 were committed by State agents (1,413 violations), a decrease of 19% compared to the first half of 2020, when State agents committed 1,755 violations. State agents were responsible for the extrajudicial killing of at least 199 people, including 28 women and 24 children, throughout the DRC.
4. Among State agents,⁴ soldiers of the *Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo* (FARDC) committed the highest number of the violations documented this semester, namely 716 violations and nearly 22% of the total documented. This number decreased compared to the first half of 2020 (807 violations). The majority of these violations were committed in the provinces of North Kivu (320 violations), Ituri (74 violations), Tanganyika (72 violations), South Kivu (61 violations) and Kasai Central (50 violations). FARDC soldiers committed 149 violations of the right to life (244 victims including at least 146 victims of extrajudicial executions of which 24 women and 12 children)⁵, 242 violations of the right to physical integrity (380 victims including at least 125 women and 51 children, of which 74 women and 27 children victims of sexual violence), 139 violations of the right to liberty and security of the person (317 victims, including 32 women and 11 children), 158 violations of the right to property and six cases of forced labour (19 victims). They were also responsible for 22 violations committed in the context of restrictions on democratic space, including 18 violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and four violations of the right to peaceful assembly.
5. Agents of the *Police nationale congolaise* (PNC) committed 534 violations, also a decrease from the violations documented in the first half of 2020 (725 violations). These violations were mainly documented in the provinces of North Kivu (158 violations), Kasai (87 violations), Kasai Central (67 violations), Haut-Katanga (43 violations) and Kinshasa (39 violations). PNC agents mainly committed 56 violations of the right to life (69 victims, including 47 victims of extrajudicial executions of which four women and 12 children), 148 violations of the right to physical integrity (250 victims, including 53 women and 31 children, of which 16 women and 12 children victims of sexual violence), 215 violations

⁴ State agents include soldiers of the *Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo* (FARDC), agents of the *Police nationale congolaise* (PNC), agents of the *Agence nationale de renseignements* (ANR), administrative or judicial authorities, and other State agents. Between January and June 2021, FARDC soldiers were responsible for 716 violations, PNC agents for 534 violations, ANR agents for 52 violations and various other State agents for 111 violations. In comparison, between January and June 2020, FARDC soldiers were responsible for 807 violations, PNC agents for 725 violations, ANR agents for 87 violations and various other State agents for 136 violations.

⁵ Other violations of the right to life consist mainly of death threats, forced disappearances and deaths in detention.

of the right to liberty and security of person (655 victims, including 86 women and 53 children) and 80 violations of the right to property. They also committed 35 violations in the context of restrictions on democratic space, including 19 violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, 15 violations of the right to freedom of assembly and one violation of the right to freedom of association.



6. Even though the number of human rights violations by members of the security and defense forces remains high, it should be noted that the combined efforts of national authorities and MONUSCO to curb human rights violations continue and are encouraging. The risk assessments by the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy Secretariat (HRDDP) in the UNJHRO and the risk mitigation measures that accompany them have helped maintain the commitment of the authorities, including the FARDC and PNC command, to prevent and respond to human rights violations⁶, including conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). This resulted in the signing of acts of engagement by unit commanders to adhere to the CRSV prevention and response mechanism⁷.
7. However, it should be noted that the UNJHRO continued to document appointments to command positions, including for military operations, of FARDC and PNC officers against whom there are serious allegations that they bear responsibility - direct or command responsibility - for human rights violations. This risks further eroding the trust of the population in the defense and security forces and undermining efforts to protect civilians and fight impunity. Clear guidelines should be adopted defining criteria for promotion within the armed forces and the police as well as a process for removing certain officers from frontline and command positions, and prompt and serious investigations systematically opened into allegations of human rights violations.

⁶ The committees to follow-up on human rights violations attributable to FARDC soldiers and PNC agents have enabled relevant actors (the command of defense and security forces, military justice, civil society and UNJHRO) to build capacities in this area and to fight against impunity.

⁷ See section on CRSV below for more details.

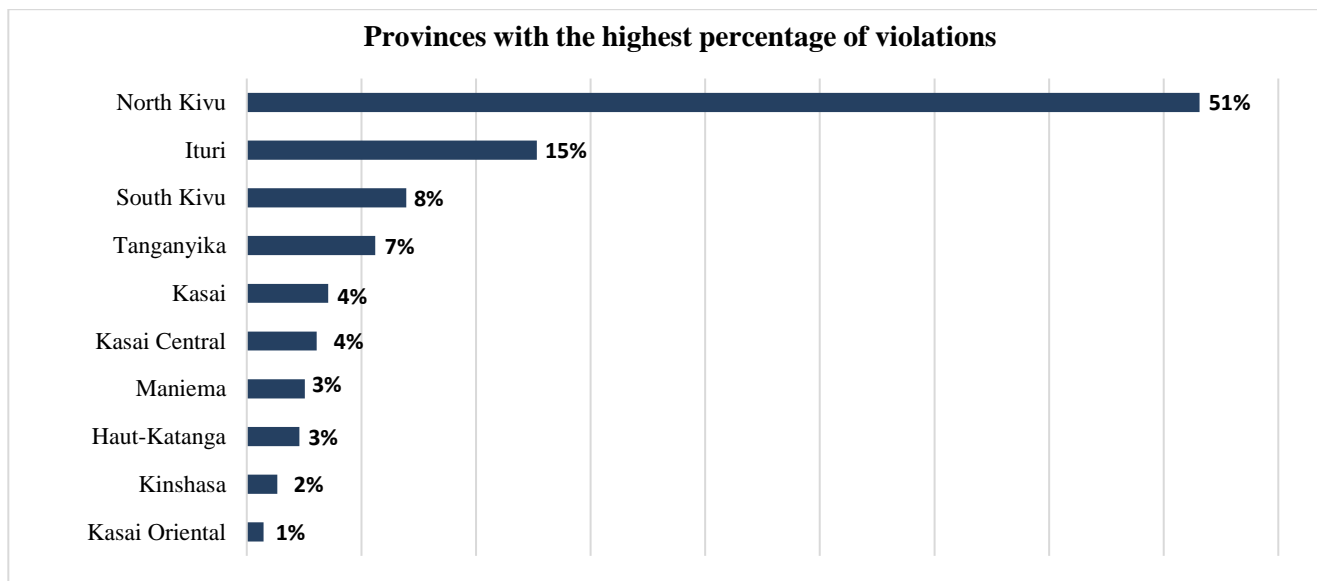
8. Combatants of all armed groups and militias combined committed 57% of the violations documented by the UNJHRO throughout the country, namely 1,863 human rights violations, a decrease of 21% compared to the first half of 2020.⁸ Combatants of armed groups were responsible for the summary execution of at least 963 people, including 212 women and 58 children, a lower number than recorded in the first half of 2020.⁹
9. While this decrease¹⁰ is noticeable in the Kasai provinces -where the Kamwina Nsapu militia has been inactive since May 2020-, Tanganyika to a certain extent and certain territories of South Kivu, the situation is worrying in the territory of Kabambare, Maniema province, the South Kivu *Hauts Plateaux*, North Kivu and Ituri provinces¹¹. The efforts made by the national authorities with the support of MONUSCO resulted in surrenders of combatants in these provinces; however, delays in the implementation of demobilization mechanisms and the restoration of State authority helped armed groups to maintain control over a large part of the territory. For instance, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) continued to extend their control beyond the Ruwenzori sector in Beni territory, North Kivu province, into the territories of Mambasa and Irumu in Ituri. This is also the case in the territories of Lubero and Masisi in North Kivu where many Mayi-Mayi groups continue to control territories where, among others, they impose illegal taxes on the population.
10. The signing by the President of the Republic of an ordinance establishing a demobilization, disarmament and community reintegration mechanism is a positive development that will make it possible to respond in a sustainable manner to the challenges posed by armed groups to the stability of the provinces affected by conflict. In addition to the state of siege in force since 6 May 2021, joint efforts in the area of transitional justice, the deployment of the civil administration and the resolution of the root causes of the conflict - community, ethnic, land conflicts, etc. - will lay a solid foundation for long-term peace and security. Moreover, while MONUSCO has entered the final phases of its withdrawal from Tanganyika province, efforts to reconcile communities and ensure the participation of all - indigenous populations, disadvantaged groups, women and young people - in public and civic life should be stepped up.

⁸ Between January and June 2020, the UNJHRO had documented 2,360 human rights abuses by combatants of all armed groups and militias throughout the DRC.

⁹ In the first half of 2020, the UNJHRO had recorded 1,315 victims of summary executions by armed groups, including 267 women and 165 children.

¹⁰ This decrease was particularly noted in the following provinces : North Kivu (-202 violations), South Kivu (-197), Ituri (-174), Kasai (-94), Maniema (-77), Tanganyika (-51), Kasai Central (-24) and Haut- Uele (-18).

¹¹ See below for more information on the situation in conflict-affected provinces.

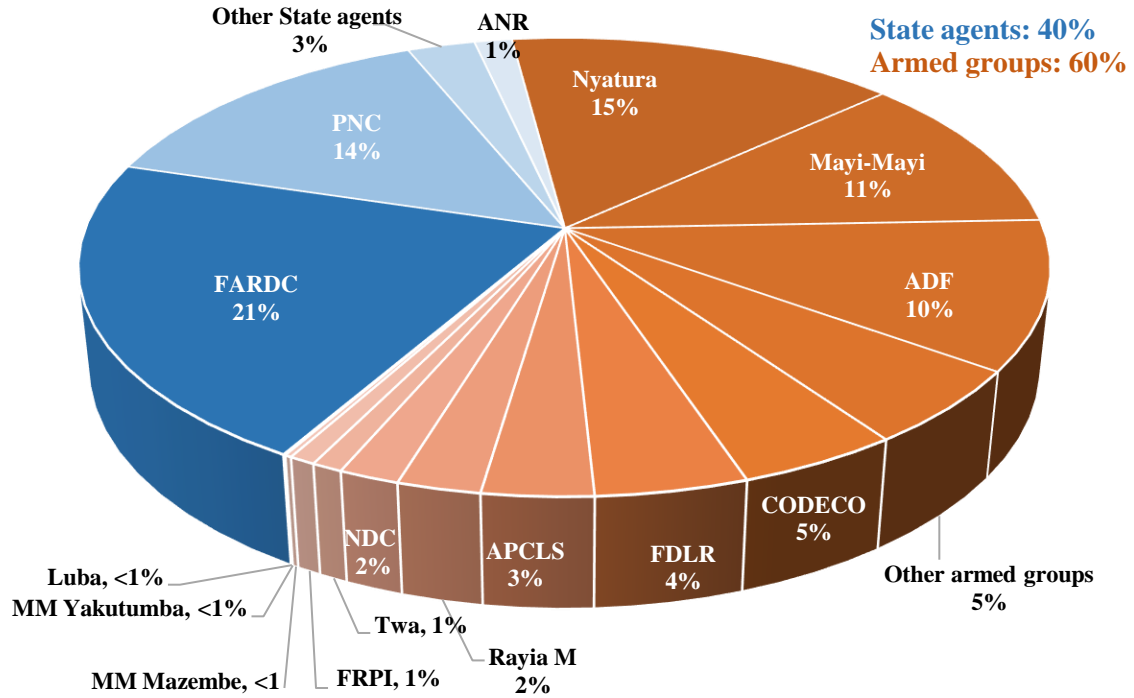


Overview of the human rights situation in conflict-affected areas¹²

11. During the first semester of 202, UNJHRO documented a total of de 3,068 human rights violations and abuses in conflict-affected provinces. Armed groups committed majority of the violations 1,853 abuses representing about 60% of documented cases), while State agents committed 1,215 abuses (about 40% of all human rights violations documented in these provinces).
12. In line with the general trend, the number of violations in these provinces decreased in comparison with same period last year (3,908 violations). Nevertheless, the number of violations by armed groups decreased significantly compared with the first half of 2020 (1,853 violations, compared with 2,357 in the first half of 2020), but remains well above the figures for the first half of 2019 (1,219 violations). State agents, and in particular the FARDC military, also committed fewer violations than in the first half of 2020 (1,215 in the first half of 2020, compared to 1,551 in the first half of 2020 and 1,238 in the first half of 2019).

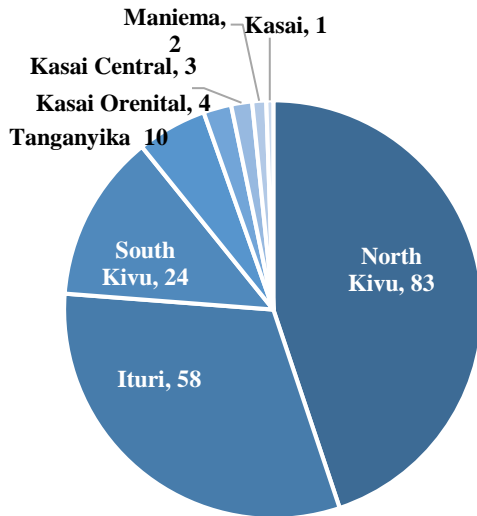
¹² UNJHRO considers as conflict-affected areas the eastern provinces of the DRC, namely Bas-Uele, Haut-Uele, Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu and Maniema, as well as the provinces of Kasai, Kasai Oriental and Kasai Central owing to militia activity and the fight against it by the Congolese authorities, and finally the province of Tanganyika due to the resurgence of inter-ethnic conflict between Twa and Luba.

Percentage of violation per perpetrator in conflict-affected areas

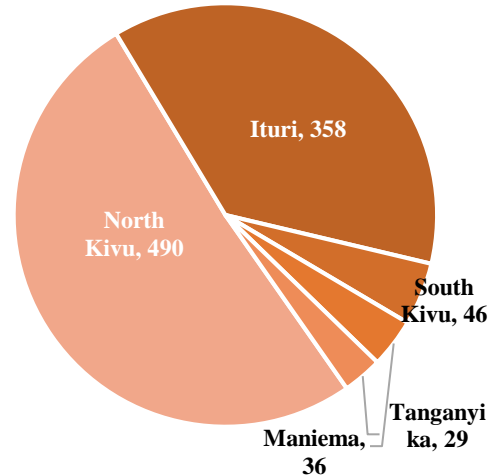


13. The UNJHRO is concerned about the high number of civilians killed in these provinces in the first six months of 2021: at least 1,147 people, including 240 women and 78 children, an average of six civilians killed each day in conflict. The number of violations of the right to life by State agents increased (185 civilians killed compared to 155) compared to the first half of 2020, while those killed as a result of attacks by armed groups decreased (962 civilians compared to 1,315 civilians killed during the same period the previous semester).

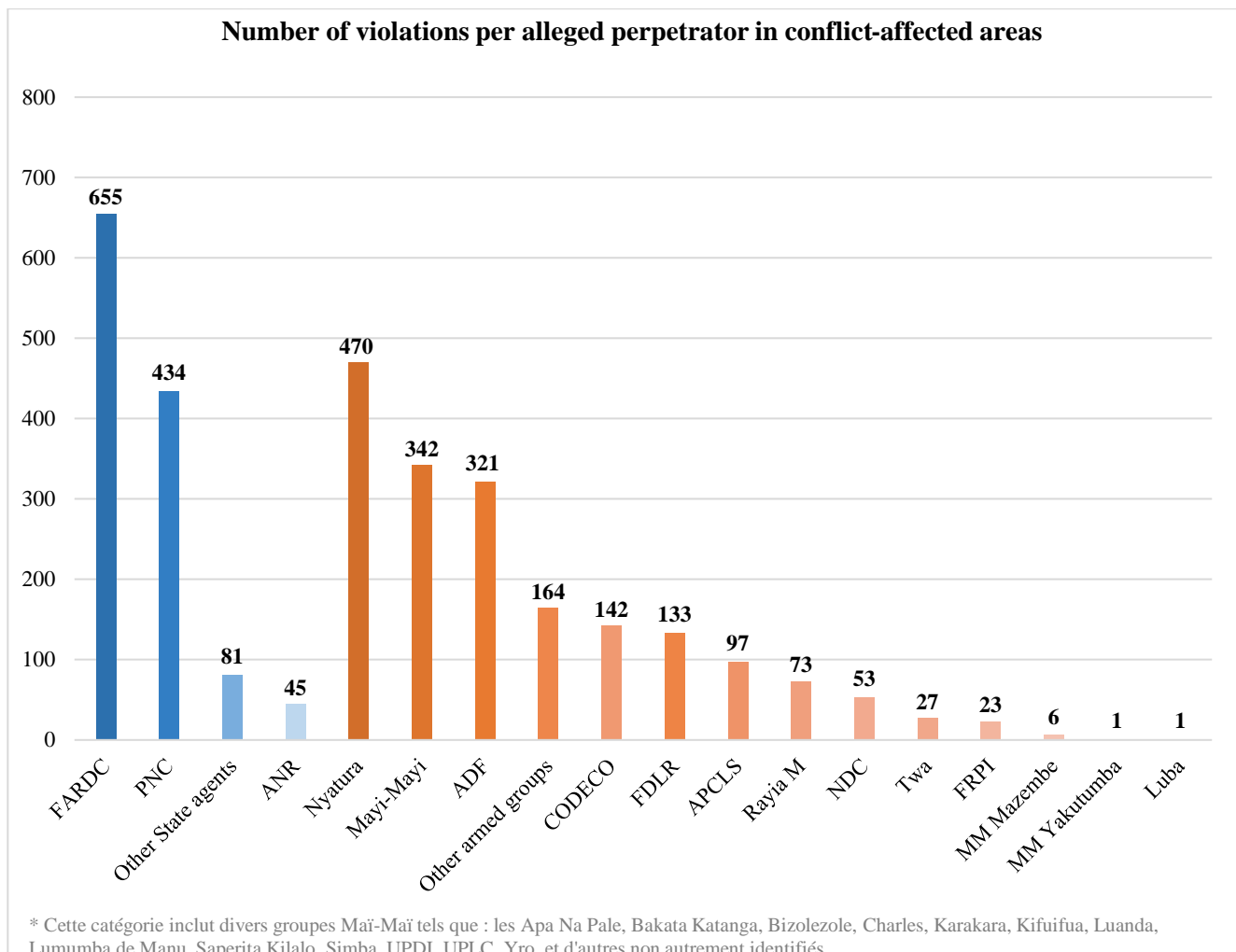
Number of victims of extrajudicial execution by State agents in conflict-affected areas



Number of victims of arbitrary executions by armed groups in conflict-affected areas



14. As in previous semesters, North Kivu remains by far the most affected by human rights violations and abuses (1,662), followed by Ituri (506 violations), South Kivu (278), Tanganyika (224), Kasai (142), Kasai-Central (122), Maniema (101), Kasai-Oriental (29) and Bas-Uélé (four).
15. FARDC soldiers committed the highest number of human rights violations in the conflict-affected provinces (655 violations, or 21%, down from 756 documented in the same period last year), mainly in North Kivu (320 violations). FARDC soldiers were responsible for 137 violations of the right to life, including extrajudicial executions of at least 140 civilians, including 24 women and 12 children; 222 violations of the right to physical integrity (360 victims, including 121 women, 72 of whom were victims of sexual violence); 126 violations of the right to liberty and security of person (300 victims, including 29 women and 10 children); 147 violations of the right to property; and six cases of forced labour (with 19 victims).



16. Among the armed groups, Nyatura combatants committed the highest number human rights abuses between January and June 2021 (470 abuses), with 468 abuses committed in North Kivu province and two in South Kivu province. These abuses are attributable to Nyatura fighters from various factions, in particular the Nyatura *Collectif de mouvements pour le changement* (CMC) faction (167 abuses), the Bazungu faction (135 abuses), the Nyatura Pascal faction (32 abuses), and the Muviringo faction (29 abuses). The latter continued to carry out attacks against the civilian population, with at least 75 people killed and 138 injured, and 39 women, one man and 22 children victims of sexual violence. They also carried out ambushes and abductions (191 victims, including 38 women and 30 children), accompanied by 140 cases of extortion, and subjected one victim to forced labour.

17. The various Mayi-Mayi¹³ armed groups were responsible for 350 abuses, followed by ADF combatants (321 abuses), other armed groups¹⁴ (165 abuses) and CODECO assailants (141 abuses), Forces

¹³ These abuses were mainly attributable to the FPP/AP Mayi-Mayi factions (56 abuses), followed by the Apa na Pale Mayi-Mayi (56 abuses), the Malaika Mayi-Mayi (50 abuses), the UPLC Mayi-Mayi (18 abuses), the Simba Mayi-Mayi (16 abuses), the Bakata Katanga Mayi-Mayi (seven abuses), the Kabeké Mayi-Mayi (six abuses) and the Yakutumba and Delphine Mayi-Mayi (five abuses each).

¹⁴ These abuses were mainly attributable to the SPLA/SSRDF (66 abuses), FPIC (40 abuses), Zaïre (17 abuses), Twigwaneho (11 abuses) and Gumino (four abuses).

démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda (FDLR) combatants were responsible for 133 abuses, the APCLS, 93 abuses, Rayia Mutomboki combatants 73 abuses, NDC-R combatants, 53 abuses, various Twa militia, 27 abuses and FRPI combatants, 23 abuses. They were mainly active in North Kivu province, particularly in the territories of Masisi, Beni and Rutshuru, where they committed the majority of abuses.

18. Combatants from various Mayi-Mayi groups (350 abuses) who were active in several regions, include the Mayi-Mayi *Forces patriotiques populaires/Armée du peuple* in North Kivu (86 abuses), the Mayi-Mayi Apa na Pale in Tanganyika (48 abuses) and the Mayi-Mayi Malaika in Maniema (41 abuses), ADF combatants committed 321 abuses, including 223 in North Kivu and 98 in Ituri. On their part, Nduma Defense of Congo-*Rénové* (NDC-R) combatants committed 53 abuses, all in North Kivu province, particularly in the territories of Walikale (31 abuses) and Masisi (14 abuses).
19. The human rights situation deteriorated in **North Kivu** province, which is the most affected by the conflict. The number of violations and abuses increased. The territory of Masisi remains the most affected (482 violations), followed by the territories of Beni (360 violations), Rutshuru (271 violations), Lubero (237 violations), Nyiragongo (130 violations), Walikale (83 violations) and Butembo (80 violations). The territory of Beni remains one of the theatres of intense confrontation between various armed groups, with harmful consequences for the civilian population, and ADF¹⁵ combatants continued to carry out deadly attacks against the civilian population with 223 abuses, including the summary executions of 360 people. Meanwhile, Nyatura combatants remain the main perpetrators of documented violations (468 abuses), followed by ADF combatants (223 abuses), the Mayi-Mayi (148 abuses), the FDLR (130 abuses), the APCLS (96 abuses), the NDC-R (53 abuses), various other armed groups (11 abuses) and the Mayi-Mayi Mazembe (six abuses).¹⁶
20. **Ituri** province experienced a significant increase in the number of documented violations and abuses, from 680 to 506. This decrease is linked in particular to the drop in attacks perpetrated by CODECO assailants, who alone were responsible for 401 violations between January and June 2021. State agents were responsible for 105 violations, representing an increase compared to the first half of 2020. However, the territories of Djugu and Irumu were marked by attacks against civilian populations by CODECO, resulting in the death of at least 361 victims.
21. Despite the decrease in human rights violations during the period under review, the UNJHRO is concerned with the increased expansion and influence of ADF combatants' activities in Irumu and Mambasa territories, leading to massive population displacement. The latter has continued to carry out violent ambushes, especially against IDP sites, destabilizing the territories already affected by armed group activism. For example, during the night of 30 to 31 May 2021, ADF combatants killed at least 55 people, abducted at least 30 others, and wounded ten civilians in the chiefdoms of Bahema Boga and Banyali Tchabi. During this attack, around 20 houses were burnt down, and many items were looted. The population was displaced *en masse*, particularly towards the town of Bunia. During a preliminary investigation into these incidents, the UNJHRO noted that local people accused members of the Banyabwisha community who had recently settled in the area of colluding with the ADF. Although some community members may be members of the armed group, there is no evidence of an alliance

¹⁵ During the month of June 2021, explosive devices were found in several locations including places of worship. The explosion of these devices injured two women and killed one man, a suspected bomber. These attacks are clearly aimed at spreading terror among the population. Investigations have not yet been able to attribute these explosives to the ADF, but the Islamic State has claimed responsibility for the attacks, although there is no evidence to support this.

¹⁶ The activism of these groups has increased significantly compared to the first semester of 2020 : from 326 to 468 for the Nyatura, and from 141 to 223 for the ADF.

between the Banyabwisha and ADF. However, public discourse, including the authorities, has contributed to the stigmatization of community members, leading to acts of retaliation.

22. In **South Kivu** province, 278 human rights violations and abuses were documented. Armed groups accounted for 58% of the violations (160 abuses), in particular the Rayia Mutomboki combatants (73 abuses). State agents committed 42% of the total violations (118 violations), mainly FARDC soldiers and PNC agents (61 and 36 violations respectively). These include summary and extrajudicial executions, violations of the right to physical integrity, sexual violence and the destruction of homes and infrastructure, were committed in the context of the ongoing inter-communal conflict in the Haut Plateau covering parts of the territories of Uvira, Fizi and Mwenga. This conflict pits the Banyamulenge community against the Bafuliiru, Bayindu-Banyindu and Babembe communities and is characterised by the involvement of multiple armed groups and militias organised in ethnically based alliances – notably combatants from the Ngumino armed group and the Twigwaneho and Android militias, linked to the Banyamulenge community, and Mayi-Mayi and Biloze Bishambuke combatants linked to the Bafuliiru, Banyindu and Babembe communities. Burundian and Rwandan armed groups are also involved in the perpetuation of the violence.
23. **Tanganyika** province remains in the grip of serious violations of human rights committed mainly by state agents, accounting for 58% of the total of 224 violations and abuses documented, in particular by FARDC soldiers (72 violations), who were responsible for, among other things, the extrajudicial execution of nine civilians and sexual violence against five women and three children. Armed groups committed 42% of the documented abuses, in particular the various factions of the Mayi-Mayi (68 abuses), who were responsible for the summary executions of at least 21 people, sexual violence against seven women and 10 children, and the abductions of 99 people, mainly in the territories of Kalemie and Nyunzu, which continue to experience ongoing inter-communal tensions between the Twa and Bantu, the Mayi-Mayi Apa na Pale (48 abuses), which intensified their attacks in the territories of Kalemie and Nyunzu, were responsible for the summary executions of 18 people and the abduction of 61 others.
24. During the first semester of 2021, the number of human rights violations and abuses perpetrated in **Kasai** province decreased from the previous period (142 violations against 236 in the first semester of 2020). **Kasai-Central** province also recorded a decrease (122 violations compared to 146). In **Kasai Oriental**, the number of violations was stable compared to the previous period (29 against 27). Overall, in these provinces, state agents are solely responsible for all violations. The number of violations committed by FARDC soldiers decreased significantly (-20%), and also the number of violations committed by PNC agents (-28%). The UNJHRO notes a further slight decrease in the number of extrajudicial executions by FARDC military, which had grown significantly in 2018 and 2017, particularly in Kasai and Kasai Central provinces due to the Kamuina Nsapu insurgency.
25. In **Maniema**, the number of documented violations and abuses was 101, reflecting a significant decrease compared to the same period last year (178). FARDC soldiers committed the majority (34 violations). They were responsible for ill-treatment of 26 people; sexual violence against 11 women and one girl; violations of the right to liberty and security of the person against 52 victims; and eight violations of the right to property. Amongst armed groups, the Mayi-Mayi Malaika combatants are the main perpetrators, including the summary executions of 31 people, including two women; violations of the right to physical integrity of 88 people, including 21 victims of sexual violence, two of whom were men and one a child; violations of the right to liberty and security of the person, with 38 victims, including three women; eight violations of the right to property; and one case of forced labour, with 20 victims.

26. On 22 May 2021 in Goma, North Kivu province, the Nyiragongo volcano, located about 12 km north of Goma, erupted, creating panic in the city – with estimated population of nearly one million –, and causing thousands to flee. An estimated 8,000 people crossed the border into neighbouring Rwanda¹⁷ and thousands more fled south to the nearby town of Sake. Most returned home on 23 May. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs,¹⁸ at least 23 villages between the volcano and the airport were destroyed by the lava flow and at least 4,500 households (about 20,000 people) lost their homes. Most people have been displaced by their own means (mainly on foot) and have been accommodated in schools, churches and host families. The provision of humanitarian assistance to IDPs has faced many logistical and organizational challenges. Most of the IDPs in Goma housed in various IDP camps and private residences were asked by the local authorities to return to their places of origin without prior assessment in violation of the IDP Guidelines.
27. On 22 June 2021, in Sake, Lubero territory, local authorities summoned some of the IDP hosts to question them about the need to return IDPs. This posed a significant challenge to the IDPs' right to liberty and security of the person. In addition, some youths attacked the IDP accommodation camps located at Neo Apostolic Church and Mubambiro, looted their food supplies and threatened the IDPs with abduction. This led to a shortage of food supplies and posed security problems for the displaced. However, the police managed to arrest some of the youths allegedly responsible for the disturbances. About 6,019 households are still reportedly in IDP and host family camps in Nyiragongo. In addition, at least 31 deaths in eruption-related events were recorded, including four inmates of Goma prison who were reportedly shot by police officers while trying to escape from the prison.
28. The UNJHRO closely monitored the situation and worked with UN partners and the provincial government in protection working groups, providing relevant protection advice in the response, in accordance with human rights and protection principles, standards and norms. The UNJHRO provided advice on integrating a human rights perspective into humanitarian planning to ensure the most appropriate response to assist vulnerable populations.
29. During the reporting period, as part of the implementation of the diligence policy, the UNJHRO supported 46 capacity-building sessions (including induction training) on international human rights law, international humanitarian law, the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence and the HRDDP, for a total of 1,705 participants FARDC and PNC, including 94 women.
30. Finally, the committees for monitoring human rights violations attributable to FARDC soldiers and PNC agents held 19 and 10 sessions respectively, while six joint sessions of the FARDC-PNC monitoring committees were held in Lubumbashi, for a total of 35 sessions. Finally, the revitalisation of the FARDC committees in Kinshasa and Uvira, the establishment of the FARDC committee in Kalehe and the PNC committee in Kinshasa, and the FARDC and PNC committees in Minova and Salamabila, represent positive developments.

Conflict-related sexual violence¹⁹

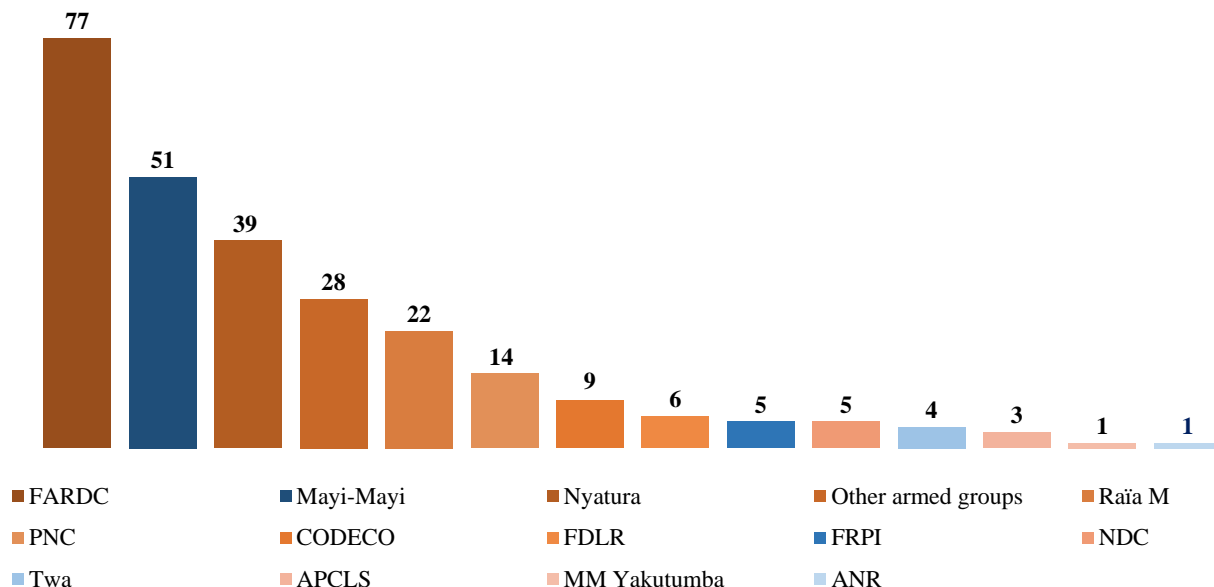
¹⁷ On 23 May 2021, the Rwandan ministry in charge of emergency management announced that it had received about 8,000 people fleeing the eruption, adding that after the lava flows stopped, most of them had returned home.

¹⁸ DR Congo : Volcanic eruption in Goma - UNOCHA Situation Report No. 1 of 25 May 2021.

¹⁹ With respect to conflict-related sexual violence, the provinces concerned are determined by the Working Group on “Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence” (MARA), which reports to the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. In 2019, the provinces concerned are the eastern provinces of the DRC, namely Bas-Uélé, Haut-Uélé, Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu, as well as the provinces of Kasai, Kasai Oriental, Kasai Central, Haut-Katanga, Tanganyika, Lualaba, Haut-Lomami, Maniema and Tshopo.

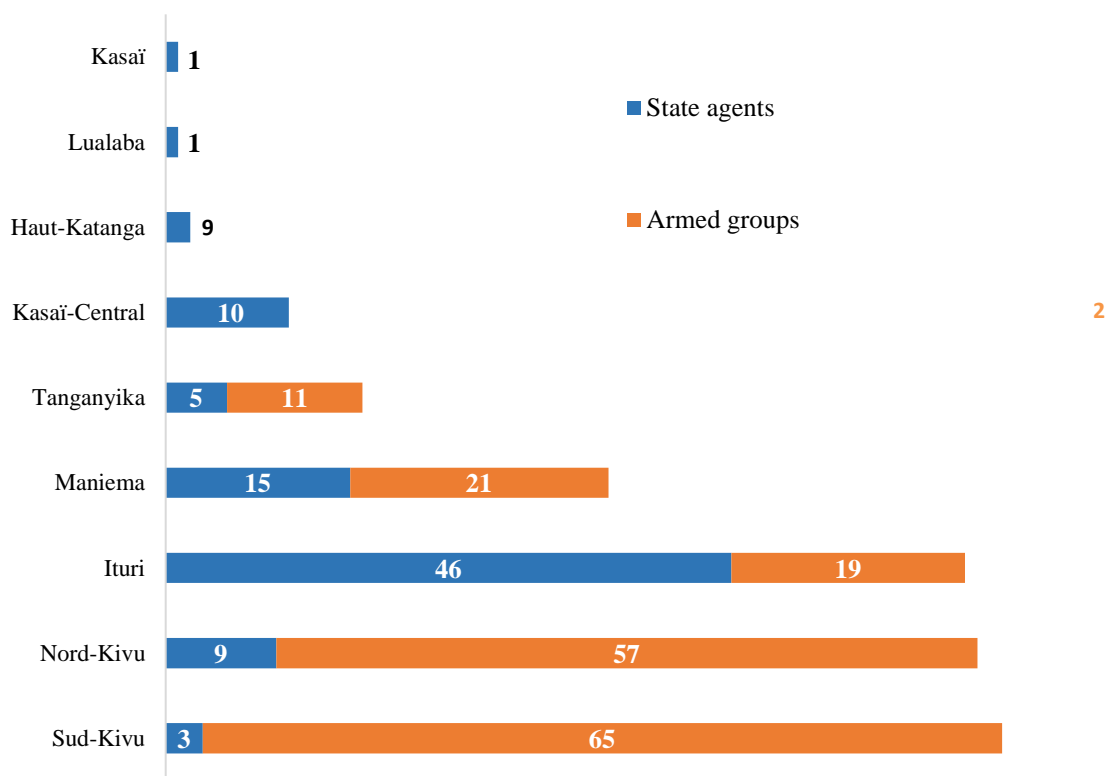
31. In the first semester of 2021, the UNJHRO documented 265 cases of conflict-related sexual violence affecting 258 women and seven adult men, a significant decrease from the previous semester (398 adult victims). This decrease reflects the significant drop in the number of attacks by armed groups (-50%, from 344 to 173 adult victims). Nearly 35% of these victims were attributable to State agents (92 victims), notably FARDC soldiers (77 victims) and PNC agents (14 victims). Most of the sexual violence attributable to state agents in these provinces was committed in Ituri (46 victims), Kasai-Central (10 victims), Haut-Katanga (two victims) and Kasai (one victim).

Number of adult victims of CRSV per perpetrator in the first semester of 2021



32. Combatants from different armed groups were responsible for about 65% of these victims (169 women and four men), in the provinces of North-South (65 victims), South Kivu (57 victims), Ituri and Maniema (18 victims each) and Tanganyika (11 victims). Among them, the Mayi-Mayi combatants are the main perpetrators (51 victims), mainly in the territory of Nyiragongo in North Kivu, followed by the Nyatura (39 victims), mainly in the territories of Masisi and Rutshuru in North Kivu, various other groups (26 victims), especially in the territory of Mwenga in South Kivu, the Rayia Mutomboki (22 victims), especially in the territory of Kahele in South Kivu and the CODECO factions (10 victims), in the territories of Djugu and Mahagi in Ituri. Most of the documented cases were committed when the women were on their way to the field, when they were abducted following an attack in the localities and residences, or in a holding cell during illegal detention by State agents.

Number of adult victims of CRSV per province in the first semester of 2021



33. The UNJHRO continues to implement activities aimed at reducing the prevalence and combating impunity for conflict-related sexual violence in the DRC. During the reporting period, the UNJHRO Office of the Senior Women's Rights Adviser facilitated a series of awareness-raising activities and continued advocacy efforts in the fight against CRSV. On 10 March 2021, as part of the partnership signed with the *Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs* (ULPGL) in Goma, North Kivu province, the UNJHRO organised a roundtable on 'Women's Rights: Women's Higher Education and Social Cohesion in the Eastern DRC'. Officials from MONUSCO and UN agencies participated in the debate with students and academic staff of the ULPGL.
34. As part of the celebration of the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. Awareness-raising and capacity-building activities were organised across the provinces, in collaboration with MONUSCO and UNJHRO partners. On 19 June, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for MONUSCO gave a speech on Radio Okapi urging an end to sexual violence in conflict, the continuation of the fight against impunity for these crimes and increased support for victims.
35. Also, in line with the Zero Tolerance campaign launched by the Heads of State of the Great Lakes region, the UNJHRO and MONUSCO's Gender Section have developed a mission-wide strategy to support the government in its implementation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The strategy includes, among other things, targeted communication, capacity building and visibility activities on the fight against impunity for sexual violence in conflict.
36. Between 29 June and 1 July, in collaboration with the Ituri gender-based violence sub-cluster, the UNJHRO organised a two-day capacity-building workshop in Bunia for 25 members (16 women and

nine men) of national and international NGOs, UN agencies, the Provincial Gender Division and the Provincial Justice Division in the areas of prevention and response to SGBV. The workshop served to strengthen coordination with the sub-cluster, including sharing and responding to alerts, the strategic framework and approaches adopted by the UN to combat CRSV, as well as the legal dimensions and implications in the fight against impunity.

37. Furthermore, since January 2021, the UNJHRO has been supporting five NGOs providing holistic assistance to victims and witnesses. Among them, four legal clinics offer free legal and medical services and consultations. Services include referral and counter-referral of cases for holistic care to ensure legal, medical, psychological and socio-economic reintegration.
38. From January to June 2021, a total of 191 survivors (39 women, 151 girls and one boy) benefited from legal assistance in Beni, Luvungi and Tshimbulu under the joint Justice, Autonomy and Dignity (JAD) project for women and girls in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This support led to 48 convictions by the Congolese judicial authorities.
39. Through the joint Women of Shabunda (WOSH) project funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund, which aims at the protection and participation of women around the Shabunda mining areas in South Kivu, 235 survivors benefited from holistic assistance in Kigulube, Shabunda territory.²⁰
40. Training on women's rights, gender-based violence, monitoring and reporting of human rights violations, and protection of civilians was organised for members of the Women's Rights Clubs created in Kigulube in May 2021. These trainings aim to build the capacity of local women working in the mining sites, survivors of gender-based violence and SGBV as well as local women leaders. A total of 531 people, including at least 93 women, 90 men, 44 girls and 154 boys, participated in these awareness raising sessions in schools and discussed topics on gender-based violence, early/forced marriage and women's rights.
41. Finally, to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence on 19 June 2021, awareness-raising sessions were organised in seven major markets in Kinshasa through their community radio stations on sexual and gender-based violence, women's rights and the prevention of COVID-19 in collaboration with the specialised agency of the Ministry of Gender, Family and Children to combat violence against women, girls and young women. At least 10,000 listeners and over 5,000 women traders/vendors were reached. Focal points have been selected among the women traders in each market. Their capacities will be strengthened to help listen, report and refer victims and families in the areas of gender-based violence and economic and social rights.

Violations of human rights and humanitarian law against children in conflict-affected areas²¹

²⁰ A total of 22 men, 205 women and six girls for medical assistance ; 22 men, 205 women, six girls for psychosocial assistance ; 13 men ; 106 women and eight girls for legal assistance ; five men, 24 women and four girls for socio-economic reintegration.

²¹ The information in this section has been collected by the MONUSCO Child Protection Section. The mandate on children and armed conflict derives from the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on the rights of the child 51/77 (1996) and other subsequent resolutions. The Security Council has created mechanisms and tools to implement this mandate, including through Security Council resolution 1612 (2005), which establishes the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) to collect reliable and up-to-date information on violations committed against children by the parties to the conflict, as well as the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. This mandate was subsequently confirmed in various other resolutions. In each country where it applies, a United Nations task force - co-chaired in the DRC by the

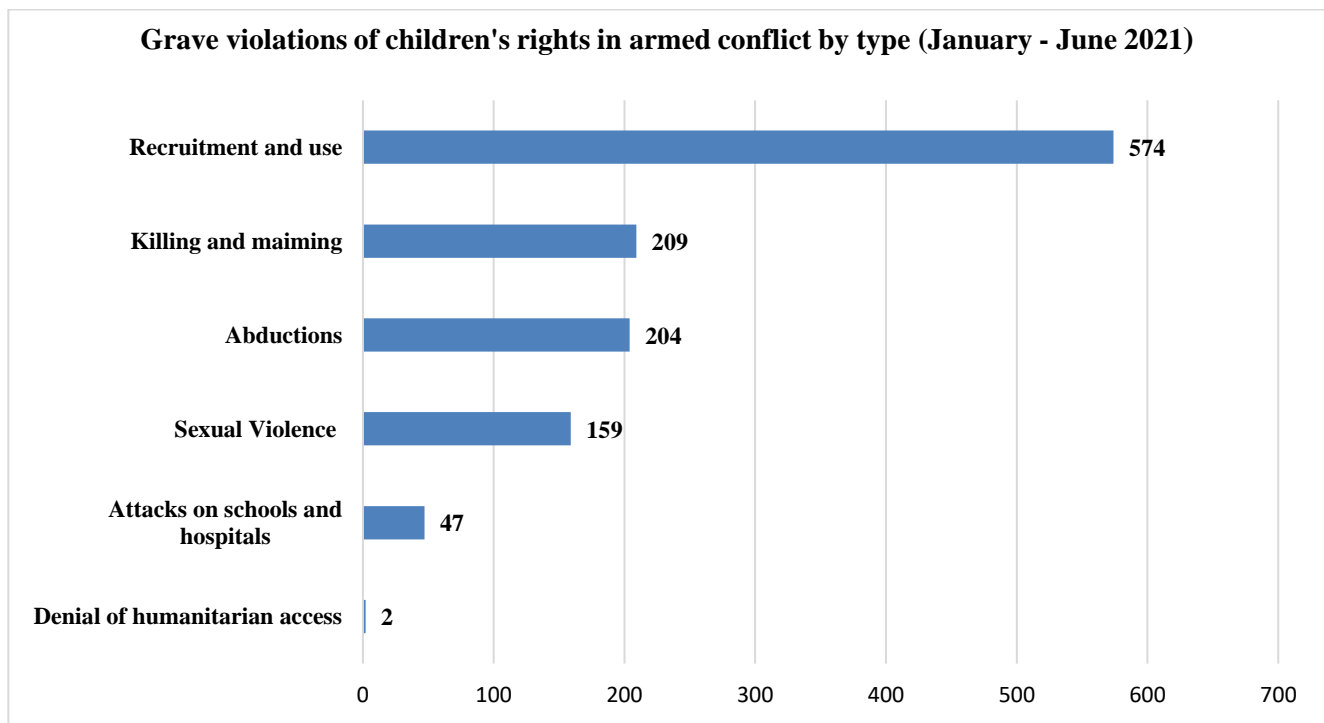
42. During the first half of 2021, MONUSCO's Child Protection Section documented 1,195 grave violations of the rights of the child²² in the context of armed conflict in the DRC, a decrease of 23% compared to the same period in 2020 (1,566 violations).
43. In total, 91% of the serious violations committed against children documented between January and June 2021 are attributable to armed groups and militias and 9% are attributable to State agents, in particular FARDC soldiers (87 violations) and PNC agents (20 violations). Among the armed groups and militias, the main perpetrators of the violations documented during this semester are the Nyatura (235 violations), the Mayi-Mayi Apa na Pale (122 violations), the Mayi-Mayi Mazembe (114 violations), the ADF (110 violations), Djugu-based armed assailants (91 violations), the APCLS (60 violations), the Mayi-Mayi Alida Kilanda (49 violations), the Rayia Mutomboki (40 violations), the FPIC (34 violations) and the Mayi-Mayi Malaika (33 violations). About 40% of the violations were committed in the province of North Kivu (486 violations), followed by Ituri (329 violations), South Kivu (180 violations), Tanganyika (141 violations), Maniema (43 violations), the Kasai provinces (12 violations) and Haut-Katanga (two violations)²³.
44. Most of the violations documented concern the recruitment and use of children by armed groups and militias. At least 574 children (528 boys and 46 girls) were separated from armed groups and militias this semester. Over 50% of the separations were documented in Nord-Kivu (291 children), followed by South Kivu (119 children), Tanganyika (93 children), Ituri (66 children) and Maniema (three children). The main perpetrators of recruitment and use of children are the Nyatura (145 children), Mayi-Mayi Mazembe (88 children), Mayi-Mayi Apa na Pale (87 children), Mayi-Mayi Alida Kilanda (49 children), APCLS (35 children), Mayi-Mayi Nshongere Bivumbo (28 children), FDLR FOCA (20 children), Rayia Mutomboki (19 children), FPIC (18 children) and various CODECO factions (11 children).
45. A total of 204 children (87 girls and 117 boys) aged between one and 17, were abducted in the provinces of North Kivu (78 children), Ituri (75 children), Tanganyika (25 children), South Kivu (23 children), the Kasai provinces (two children) and Maniema (one child). The main perpetrators of abductions are the Nyatura (45 children), various CODECO factions (29 children), the ADF (25 children), the Mayi-Mayi Apa na Pale (20 children), the Mayi-Mayi Mazembe (19 children), the APCLS (13 children) and the Rayia Mutomboki (12 children).
46. At least 157 girls and two boys, aged between two and 17, survived various types of sexual violence in North Kivu (52), Ituri (46), Maniema (34), Tanganyika (10), South Kivu (nine), Grand Kasai (six) and Haut-Katanga (two). Nearly one third of sexual violence cases were committed by State agents, namely 40 by FARDC soldiers and 10 by PNC agent. The main perpetrators of sexual violence among the armed groups are the Nyatura (28), various CODECO factions (28) and the Mayi-Mayi Malaika (24).

SRSG and the UNICEF Representative - monitors and reports on the six serious violations covered by the MRM, namely the recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming, sexual violence, abduction, attacks on schools and hospitals, and denial of humanitarian access. In addition, the work of the MONUSCO Child Protection Section is guided by the joint policy of the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support on the integration of child protection in United Nations peacekeeping operations (2017). In addition to documenting the six grave violations referred to, the priorities of the Section are the continued implementation of the joint action plan of the Government of the DRC and the United Nations to end the recruitment and use and other grave violations against children; to engage in talks with the armed groups so that children are released, end their recruitment and prevent their reutilization; support the fight against the impunity of perpetrators of grave violations committed against children.

²² Against 775 boys, 370 girls and one child whose sex could not be determined.

²³ In addition, two violations were initially committed in Rwanda, consisting in the recruitment by the ADF of two children who were then taken to the DRC by this same group.

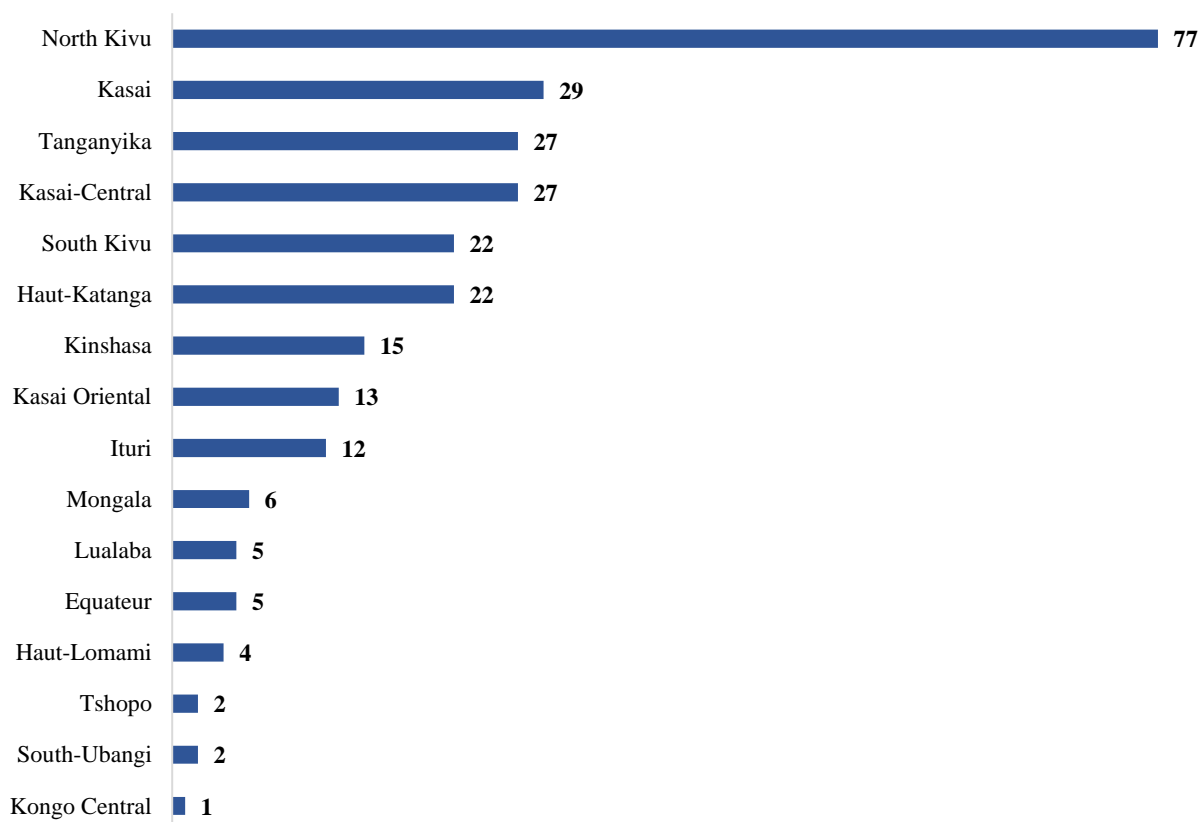
47. At least 209 children (80 girls, 128 boys and one child whose sex could not be determined), aged between one and 17, were killed (133 children) and maimed (76 children) in Ituri (112 children), North Kivu (61 children), South Kivu (16 children), Tanganyika (13 children), Grand Kasai (four children) and Maniema (three children). Nearly 17% of these violations are attributable to State agents, namely FARDC soldiers (28 children) and PNC agents (seven children). The other killings and mutilations were mainly committed by the ADF (72 children), Nyatura (16 children), non-identified Mayi-Mayi (13 children) and the FPIC (11 children).
48. The Child Protection Section documented 47 attacks on schools (23) and hospitals (24). Nearly 30% of these violations are attributable to FARDC soldiers (13 attacks) and PNC agents (one attack). The other attacks were mainly committed by various CODECO factions (13 attacks), Mayi-Mayi Ilunga (10 attacks) and ADF (seven attacks). In addition, two cases of denial of humanitarian access by Mayi-Mayi Malaika (one) and Twigwaneho (one) were documented in Maniema and South Kivu.



Violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms related to the democratic space

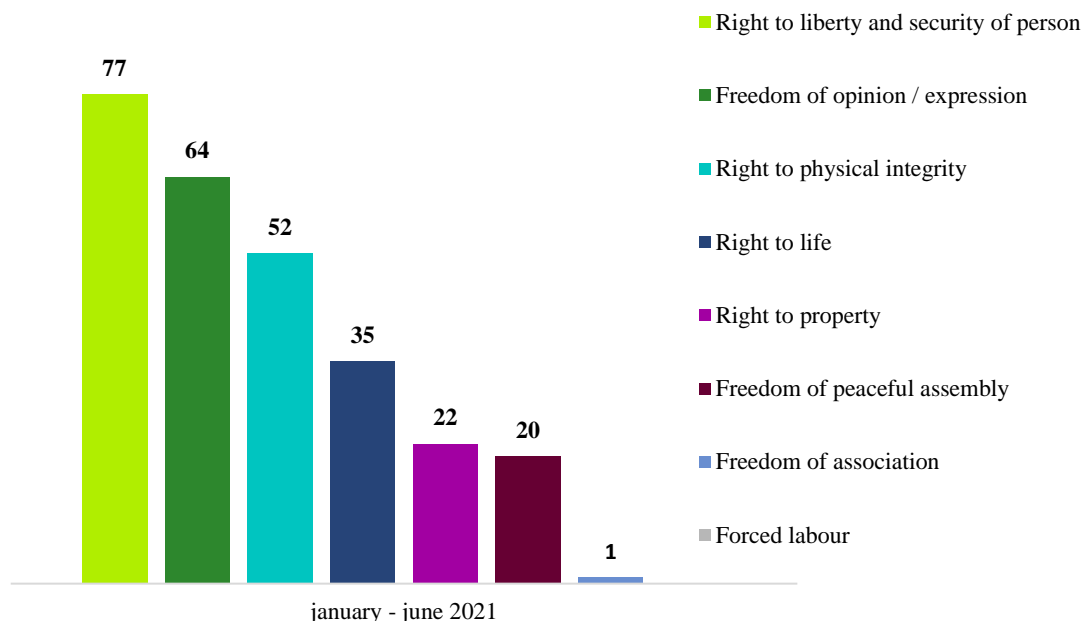
49. From 1 January to 30 June 2021, the UNJHRO documented 271 violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms linked to restrictions on democratic space throughout the Congolese territory. This is a decrease of nearly 53% (302 violations) compared to the same period in 2020 (573 violations) and nearly 25 % (91 violations) compared to the previous six-month period (362 violations documented between July and December 2020). This downward trend can be explained by a decrease in law enforcement in the context of the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. As the state of health emergency has been lifted, restrictions on the exercise of fundamental freedoms have also decreased.
50. Human rights violations related to the democratic space reported by the UNJHRO were committed mainly in North Kivu (77 violations), Kasai (29 violations), Tanganyika (27 violations), Kasai-Central (27 violations), Haut-Katanga (22 violations), and South Kivu (22 violations).

Per province

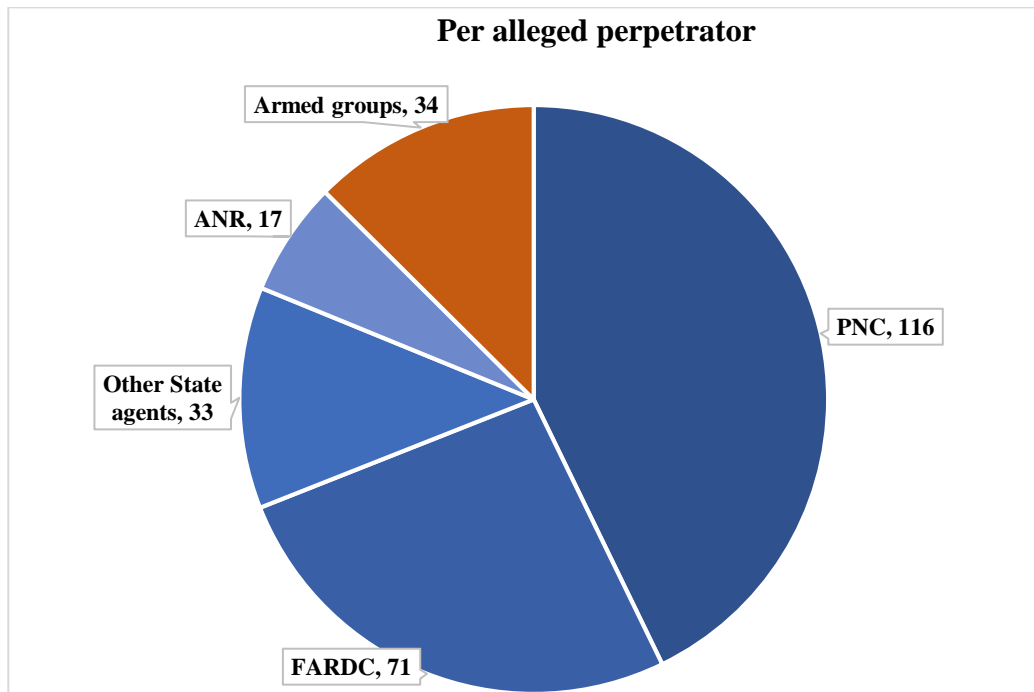


51. The most frequently reported violations were violations of the right to liberty and security of the person (77 violations, with 219 victims, including 16 women), followed by violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression (64 violations) and violations of the right to physical integrity (52 violations, with 120 victims, including 13 women and seven children). The UNJHRO also documented 35 violations of the right to life, including 12 victims of extrajudicial and summary executions (including one child), 22 violations of the right to property, 20 violations of the freedom of demonstration and peaceful assembly and one violation of the freedom of association.

Number of documented cases per type of violation

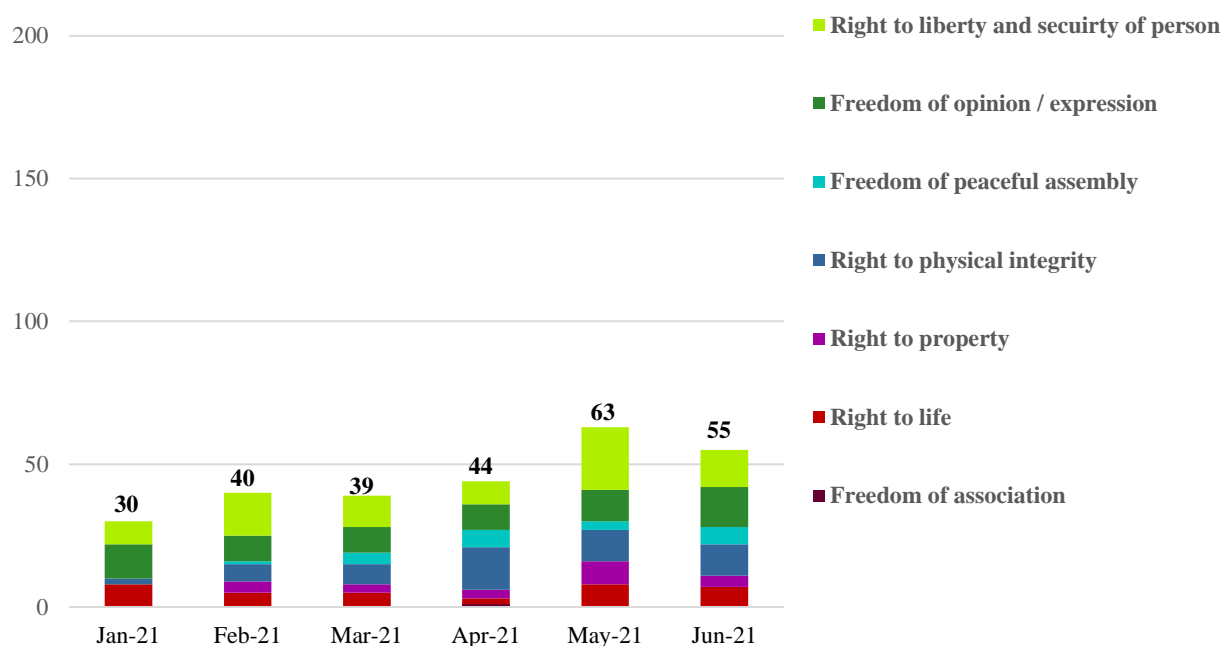


52. During the demonstrations organized in April 2021 against insecurity and calling for the departure of MONUSCO and international humanitarian organizations in North Kivu, the UNJHRO documented excessive use of force by PNC officers. Many demonstrators have been beaten and detained in conditions that disturb their rights. As of today, two Lucha activists remain in detention without trial in Butembo, Lubero territory, in North-Kivu province.
53. The UNJHRO also noted with worry the use of force by demonstrators to push those who did not wish to participate in the demonstrations to observe the strike, the destruction of public buildings and property belonging to humanitarian organizations. These demonstrations also degenerated in and around Goma into inter-community clashes between Nande and Hutu with the participation of armed groups. Many civilians were killed and wounded by bullets and knives because of this violence. Finally, threats against humanitarian personnel and their partners, the dissemination of hate messages and the propagation of false news in the media and social networks through tracts, often at the encouragement of politicians and economic operators, had seriously an impact on the work of the United Nations and humanitarian organizations.
54. The UNJHRO continues to reiterate its commitment to fundamental freedoms. While citizens have the right to express their views through legal and legitimate way, this freedom is incompatible with violence, hate speech and the dissemination of false information to create phobia and attacks on the rights of others. The UNJHRO continued to engage with authorities, communities, and civil society organizations to reduce tensions and raise awareness about respecting the legal provisions on public demonstrations and the rights of people arrested in the context of public demonstrations.
55. The main alleged perpetrators of these violations are, as in the same period last year, PNC agents with 116 violations, (almost 43% of the documented violations), followed by FARDC soldiers (71 violations), other state agents (33 violations) and ANR agents (17 violations). Combatants of armed groups, for their part, committed 34 violations in relation to the democratic space, a significant decrease compared to the same period in 2020 (104 violations).



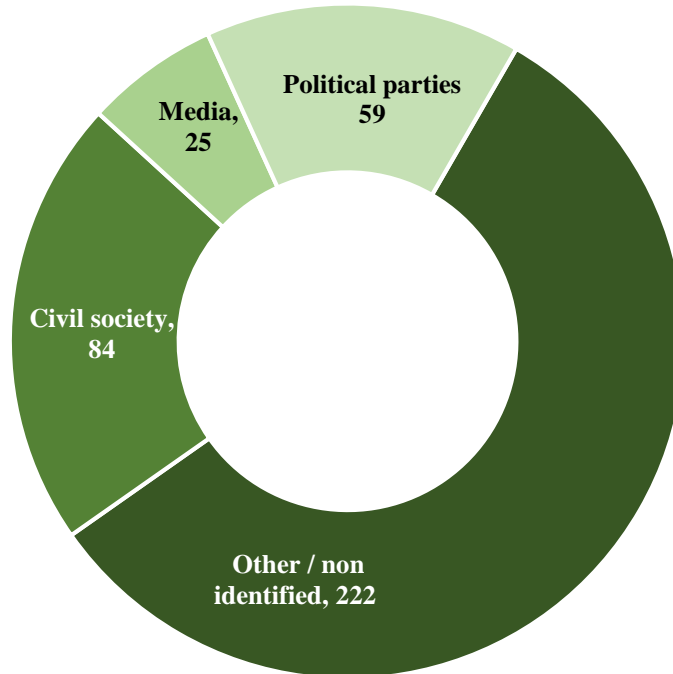
56. Almost 60% of these violations were done in the last quarter of the reporting period, with a top in May (63 violations), followed by a decrease in June (55 violations). Several socio-political events in DR-Congo during this quarter had an impact on the restriction of democratic space: demonstrations against MONUSCO and humanitarians in connection with killings in Beni by the ADF, the adjustment of former political alliances, the proclamation of State of siege by the President of the Republic, and the observation of the third wave of contamination by coronavirus, which led to the restriction of liberty in relation to the observance of barrier measures.

Evolution of documented human rights violations related to democratic space per month



57. There were at least 390 victims of violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms related to democratic space during this six-month period. Members of civil society organisations continue to be the main victims of these violations (84 victims), followed by members of political parties (59 victims) followed by journalists and other media professionals (25 victims). The rest of the victims are people with no known affiliation (222 victims).
58. During the six months under review, journalists and human rights defenders were regularly targeted by arbitrary arrests. For example, on 25 April 2021, in Kinshasa, a journalist and program facilitator "Bosolo Na Politik" was arrested by ANR agents. He was accused of having, during a broadcast on 14 April 2021, expressed critical opinions on the behavior of political decision-makers and the lethargy of the political authorities. In particular, he was said to have cited the curfew to fight the spread of Covid-19 and the payment of soldiers in the field of military operation. the Public Persecutor of the Gombe Court of First Instance released the victim after paying a fine.

Per victim



59. It is also important to note the worrying trend of increasing violence perpetrated by political party activists. The UNJHRO has documented many cases of attacks by people identifying themselves as members or sympathizers of the «Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social» (UDPS) against Ecidé activists and journalists whom they accuse of criticizing their political party and their leaders. Messages of hate and incitement to violence against political opponents from members of « Parlements debout » close to the UDPS have also been widely circulated on social networks. This trend is worrying as the elections approach. On several occasions, the UNJHRO has called on political leaders to refrain from inciting violence and to distance themselves from those who use physical or verbal violence, regardless of the channel or the reasons. Imperative investigations for these incidents to punish the perpetrators are necessary to ensure that political debate takes place in a peaceful environment that respects the human rights of others.
60. In addition, during the period under review, the UNJHRO continued to document cases of hate speech and incitement to violence. At least 15 cases of hate speech, including six cases in Beni, North Kivu province, eight in Uvira, South Kivu province, and one case in Lubumbashi, Haut-Katanga province, were documented by the UNJHRO during the reporting period. Hate speech has contributed to violence against civilians in conflict areas.
61. To respond to this situation, within the agenda of the UN Hate Speech Task Force, the UNJHRO organised training and awareness-raising activities on hate speech and incitement to violence. Three training sessions were held in Kinshasa for 63 people, including 19 women, in April and June 2021. These training sessions were aimed particularly at parliamentarians, students, and representatives of the National Human Rights Commission, the Higher Council for Audiovisual and Communication and the Ministry of Human Rights.

Transition: lessons learned in the western provinces and prospects in Kasai and Tanganyika

62. Since 2010, MONUSCO has begun a gradual process of withdrawal that has led to the closure of some offices and the reconfiguration of civilian and military components to cover mainly the conflict-affected areas. Except for Kinshasa, the western provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kasai, Katanga and Maniema were closed in turn following a process agreed with the Congolese authorities at the request of the UN Security Council. The Kasai offices reopened in 2016 in response to the deteriorating security situation following the outbreak of violence during the Kamuina Nsapu insurgency.
63. Despite the closure of MONUSCO offices in Kasai in 2021 and the planned closure of Tanganyika in 2022, the UNJHRO will maintain a significant presence in Kananga, Kalemie and Tshikapa as part of its technical cooperation mandate as the OHCHR presence in the DRC. Like Kisangani, Lubumbashi and the mobile monitoring team in the west, these offices will continue to implement OHCHR's mandate as part of the UN country team, including monitoring and situational analysis to monitor of and prevent the escalation of latent conflicts, implementation of activities in the area of the fight against impunity, transitional justice, women's rights, civic space, economic, social and cultural rights, and the protection and promotion of human rights.
64. The missions carried out in the western provinces of the DRC during the period under review indicates a general deterioration of the situation, particularly in the detention centres in these provinces. The lack of resources allocated to the judicial system does not allow for the proper administration of justice. The number of arbitrary arrests and illegal pre-trial detentions is constantly increasing, leading to unjustified prison overcrowding. The conditions of detention facilities are also to be deplored. The insufficient number of magistrates makes the judiciary inefficient and the cause of increase petty crimes and mob justice cases. This situation is very worrying, and it is easy to see the difficulties in the functioning of the public justice service in the most isolated areas.
65. All the provinces are also marked by the emergence of very young institutions (governorates, provincial assemblies, etc.) following the new provincial division of the DRC, which has been in effect since 2016. The lack of experience of these authorities, coupled with the absence of decentralised services of the Congolese state to accompany this transition, threatens the rule of law and the sustainability of human rights in the provinces. In fact, in these provinces, the provincial authorities are involved in a growing number of human rights violations. This situation has led to a progressive restriction of the rights of media professionals and human rights defenders.
66. Civil society, through the Protection Networks set up by the UNJHRO, is in great difficulty since the withdrawal of MONUSCO in 2019. Most of the members of the networks no longer meet and are subject to reprisals from the provincial authorities, which greatly reduces their scope for action in the field. The CNDH, faced with major organizational and operational difficulties, cannot support civil society due to a lack of resources.
67. Lessons have been learned from the transition process, including the need to continue to engage with the authorities and civil society to strengthen advocacy and collaboration mechanisms to improve the human rights situation, specifically in the areas of individual protection, democratic space, and the legal and material conditions of detention. In this context, the revitalization and strengthening of networks to protect human rights defenders and substantial support for the CNDH are at the heart of interventions in transitional areas where MONUSCO is no longer present. For example, the UNJHRO and MONUSCO have supported the construction and equipping of the headquarters and the training of CNDH staff in Kalemie and plan to continue the program in North Kivu and other provinces in the east of the DRC.

68. The second lesson learned from the transition is the need to increase the UNJHRO's information gathering and analytical capacity on security, inter-communal conflict, and potential political tensions that could lead to human rights violations. Thus, the UNJHRO conducted several assessment missions and continued to consolidate the information-gathering network in the western areas and those under the responsibility of the Kisangani and Lubumbashi offices, which continue to face security risks related to Mbororo migration, attacks by armed forces and South Sudanese and Central African rebel groups (North-Oubangui, Haut-Uélé, Bas-Uélé, and Tshopo), as well as persistent ethnic conflicts and attacks by the Mayi-Mayi Bakata Katanga (Lualaba and Haut-Katanga).
69. Conflicts over land and natural resources exploitation are also important human rights challenges. Conflicts between the Twa and the Bantu in Monkoto, Tshuapa province, and the use of force to evict artisanal diggers in the provinces of the Katanga region have led to violence and casualties. The UNJHRO has undertaken a training and capacity-building program for mining companies on human rights to address this situation. For example, on 6 April 2021, at the request of Tenke Fungurume Mining, the UNJHRO organized a workshop on respect for human rights in the context of natural resource exploitation. Support is also being provided to the military justice system to investigate human rights violations committed by the defense and security forces during the eviction of artisanal miners. In Tshuapa province, the difficulties encountered in gaining access to areas affected by community conflicts between the Twa and Bantu have not yet enabled the UNJHRO to collect information and conduct awareness-raising and advocacy activities. Discussions are underway with civil society organizations and the UN country team to find appropriate solutions to the prevailing situation.

Effects of a state of siege on the administration of justice and fundamental rights

70. The state of siege proclaimed by the President of the Republic in Ituri and North Kivu on 6 May 2021 was extended twice by Parliament. The main implications of the state of siege are a transfer of powers from the civilian to the military authorities, an extension of police powers, an extension of the jurisdiction of the military courts to try civilians for criminal offenses, the restriction of fundamental rights and freedoms, and the suspension of immunities from prosecution enjoyed by certain persons because of their status (including national and provincial deputies and senators).
71. While some members of the military administration have been deployed and the formal transfer of criminal cases from civilian to military courts has been completed, the corresponding resources have not been provided to military courts and tribunals to handle criminal cases that were pending in civilian courts. As a result, several cases remain unprocessed and dozens of people remain in pre-trial detention without being heard, in violation of the law. In addition, the lack of respect for judicial procedure in the context of juvenile justice was also noted. This situation contributes to prison overcrowding and the risk of an increase in acts of mob justice. In order to safeguard the rights of the defense and the right of appeal, which are among the non-derogable rights, and to guarantee the proper administration of justice, the Minister of Justice signed an ordinance specifying the terms of the state of emergency. She recalled that the civil courts should continue to operate and that judicial procedures should be accelerated to reduce cases of prolonged detention.
72. Presently, the UNJHRO has not observed any discernible impact of the state of siege on the protection of civilians. Armed groups continue to attack civilians in their homes and farms and on roads. The situation is particularly worrying in the territories of Irumu in Ituri and Beni in North Kivu. Although there have been some positive developments in Ituri province, where the governor has announced the

securing of some roads that were previously occupied by armed groups, the level of insecurity remains high.

Developments in the fight against impunity and transitional justice

73. During the first half of 2021, at least 84 PNC officers, 196 FARDC soldiers, and 122 members of armed groups were convicted of acts constituting human rights violations throughout the Democratic Republic of Congo, reflecting a significant effort by judicial authorities to combat impunity. For example, on 25 May 2021, in Kinshasa, the director of the criminal brigade of the judicial inspectorate was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment by the Kinshasa/Gombe Court of Appeal for extortion, arbitrary arrest, and criminal conspiracy. In its ruling, the Court also sentenced the person concerned to pay a fine of 1,000 U.S. dollars and reimburse the sum of 57,000 U.S. dollars to the civil party. As a reminder, the the director of the criminal brigade was prosecuted for extorting funds and arbitrarily arresting a man of Indian nationality. It should be noted that two other co-accused of the director were each sentenced to 2 and 3 years in prison by the court for complicity in extortion and arbitrary arrest.
74. The UNJHRO continued to support these efforts by participating in X joint fact-finding missions and Y mobile court hearings with military and civilian justice authorities throughout the country to bring to justice those responsible for serious human rights violations.
75. Although the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a signatory to the protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and a moratorium on the death penalty was in place, death sentences continued. A law abolishing the death penalty is needed to fulfill the country's international commitments. On 5 January 2021, in Kipushi, Haut-Katanga province, the garrison military court sentenced to death an FARDC soldier from the 21st Brigade of the Rapid Reaction Unit (URR). As a reminder, on 16 December 2020 in Kasumbalesa, Pweto territory, he had shot a man who was trying to smuggle goods from the Republic of Zambia. The victim was shot in the head and died instantly.
76. On 15 May 2021 in Kinshasa, the Tribunal de Grande Instance de Gombe, sitting in flagrante delicto, sentenced 28 people to death for criminal conspiracy, malicious destruction and rebellion. These people had been involved in the incidents that occurred during the prayer of the end of Ramadan 2021 at the Martyrs' Stadium. In addition, one person, on whom was retained only the offense of rebellion, was sentenced to 5 years in prison. It should be noted that the court declared itself incompetent with regard to six other people involved in these events because of their minority age.
77. The UNJHRO recorded a total of 154 deaths in detention during the six months under review, a 42 percent decrease from the same period last year (89 people died in detention between January and June 2020). These deaths included malnutrition, poor hygiene, lack of access to medical care, and in some cases mistreatment.
78. At least 111 individuals escaped from correctional facilities during the reporting period, a very significant decrease of 62.3 percent compared to the same previous period (295 documented escapes). For example, in March 2021, the UNJHRO recorded the escape of at least 89 people, including one woman, from prisons and detention centers. Between 27 February and 1st March 2021, in Lisala, Mongala province, 30 male detainees escaped from Angenga prison in circumstances that have not yet been clarified. Several inmates were reportedly injured, including by prison guards, and all prison documents and valuable property were burned, according to the interim director of the prison.

79. On 22 June 2021, in Tshisuku, Kasai-Central province, the Minister of Human Rights presided over an official burial ceremony for the remains of ten of the fifty or so people killed in Tshisuku during the Kamuina Nsapu insurrection. In the presence of the Director of the UNJHRO, the Advisor to the Head of State in charge of international justice, provincial authorities, traditional chiefs, community leaders and victims' associations, a memorial in honor of the victims of the violence that plunged the Kasai region into mourning between 2016 and 2017 was inaugurated by the Minister, who presented a public apology on behalf of the Head of State and the Government.
80. This symbolic ceremony is part of the transitional justice mechanisms implemented in the Kasai region and supported by, among others, the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund through the Peace, Justice, Reconciliation and Reconstruction Project (PAJURR) implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the UNJHRO and the NGO *Search for Common Ground*. This project also supported a process of popular consultations to gather the opinions of the population on their needs for justice and the mechanisms adapted to the Kasai context. Based on these consultations, an edict creating a Justice, Truth and Reconciliation Commission was adopted by the Kasai-Central Provincial Assembly on 28 June 2021. This significant development raises hopes among the population in search of truth and justice. Additional efforts are needed to appoint the commission's facilitators and to provide it with the resources necessary for its proper functioning.
81. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Technical Assistance Team (TAT) for Kasai contributed to the fight against impunity and to the transitional justice process by providing forensic expertise in the search for the truth and in support of ongoing judicial proceedings. These judicial proceedings also benefited from the technical and financial support of the UNJHRO, which also supports the victims and civil parties participating in the trials. The importance of this support was unanimously welcomed, particularly by the victims' associations, which stressed that the population of Tshisuku will not be able to mourn until the judicial case that has already been opened leads to the conviction of the guilty parties.
82. The transitional justice process in the Kasai region follows a victim-centered approach and depends for its success on local ownership, the support of the national authorities, already demonstrated by the commitment made by President Tshisekedi on 7 August 2020 and substantial support from donors.

UNJHRO Activities

83. During the first half of 2021, the UNJHRO organized at least 123 trainings, technical support or awareness-raising activities throughout the country, some of which were organized by or with the assistance of partners and national institutions, with a view to strengthening the capacities of State and non-State actors in the area of human rights and informing them of its mandate, in particular the CNDH and the Ministry of Human Rights. These activities, aimed at 3948 people, 1211 of whom were women (30. 67%), focused on human rights and international humanitarian law, human rights and public freedoms, human rights and sexual violence, equality between men and women and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in various international instruments; the rights of detainees, in particular human dignity, participation in the trial, the right to a fair trial; women's leadership and the participation of women living with disabilities in political and democratic processes; monitoring, follow-up of human rights violations as well as advocacy with authorities and other stakeholders.
84. For example, on 14 and 15 April 2021 in Kinshasa, the UNJHRO in collaboration with the National Federation of Associations of People Living with Disabilities of Congo (FENAPHACO) organized a

roundtable on women's leadership and the participation of women living with disabilities in political and democratic processes. A total of 45 women and 10 men took part in this activity. From 20 to 23 April 2021 in Tshikapa, Kasai Province, the UNJHRO organized several activities as part of the implementation of the Spontaneous Surrender in Kasai and Tanganyika (SSKAT) project. A total of 40 religious leaders, including two women, 40 community leaders, including five women, and 35 lawyers from the Kasai Bar Association, including one woman, were sensitized on the fight against impunity and the need for transitional justice in the Kasai province.

85. PNC officers were also trained in the framework of activities to mitigate the risks of human rights violations. From 18 to 19 May 2021, in Kinshasa, the UNJHRO supported the training of inspectors from the General Police Inspectorate on human rights and fundamental freedoms. This activity organized by the General Police Inspectorate was attended by 60 police inspectors, including 12 women in charge of discipline and respect for human rights by PNC officers.
86. During the period under review, the UNJHRO celebrated various international days in collaboration with its partners throughout the Democratic Republic of Congo by raising awareness and building the capacities of various target groups on specific human rights themes. This was the case for International Women's Day on 8 March 2021, International Albinism Awareness Day on 13 June 2021 and International Day in Support of Victims of Torture on 26 June 2021.
87. Finally, under its protection program, the UNJHRO processed 156 protection cases for 257 persons, including 28 women. These cases were distributed as follows: 186 human rights defenders (including 16 women), 17 victims (including four women), 54 journalists including eight women in the provinces of Ituri, Kasai-Central, Kasai, Kasai-Oriental, Tanganyika, Haut-Katanga, Maniema, North and South Kivu, Kinshasa and Lualaba. Of the 156 cases recorded, 50 were attributable to the FARDC, 48 to the PNC, 35 to political-administrative, judicial and intelligence authorities, 13 to elements of armed groups, and 10 to unknown persons. The UNJHRO is concerned about the number of threats and intimidation against human rights defenders, who represent the majority of cases of individual protection.

Interactive dialogue on the human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo

88. On 22 March 2021, an interactive dialogue on the human rights situation in the DRC was held at the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The High Commissioner for Human Rights reiterated her main concerns about the devastating impact of armed conflict on the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MONUSCO noted that the DRC had been marked by political upheaval in recent months, leading to significant changes in the country's institutions. The main issue was establishing a government capable of responding effectively to the many expectations of the Congolese people regarding peace, security, and development.
89. The international expert on the situation in Kasai welcomed the recent conviction of the militia leader Katende Laurent by the Kananga Military Tribunal but pointed out that none of the priority cases opened are currently on trial. This judicial slowness has caused concern among Kasai people, particularly the victims, some of whom have established associations to better claim their right to justice and reparation.

90. The Minister for Human Rights highlighted the progress made in promoting and protecting human rights in the DRC. These included, among other things, the adoption of a strategic document prepared by the Government with the support of the UNJHRO and two draft laws on persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples. The Executive Director of *Voix des Sans Voix pour les Droits de l'Homme* stated that, in general, the human rights situation had deteriorated in recent months, as several human rights defenders and journalists had been subjected to intimidation, harassment, arbitrary arrest, and detention in many provinces where peaceful demonstrations had taken place.
91. In the ensuing debate²⁴, speakers urged the international community to make efforts to combat the illegal exploitation of resources and endemic poverty. ADF combatants continued to attack civilians and increase pressure on the Congolese army and peacekeepers, the speakers noted. The Government should continue its efforts to strengthen the rule of law, protect human rights defenders, and combat impunity through the accelerated operationalization of transitional justice processes and the investigation and prosecution of all reported abuses.

²⁴ Speakers included Sweden on behalf of the Nordic and Baltic countries, the European Union, Cameroon on behalf of the African Group, the Russian Federation, Senegal, France, Togo, Japan, the Netherlands, Mauritania, Switzerland, Venezuela, Belgium, the United States, Egypt, Angola, China, Botswana, the United Kingdom, South Sudan, Ireland and Italy. The following civil society organizations also took the floor: World Vision International; Lutheran World Federation; World Organisation Against Torture; International Service for Human Rights; Reporters Without Borders International; *Rencontre Africaine pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme*; CIVICUS - World Alliance for Citizen Participation; and the Centre for Human Rights.