



STAND UP FOR CONGO!!!

December 19th, 2008



Join the Congolese Community of Chicago (CCC-DRC) and the United African Organization (UAO) for a Forum and March to stand with the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo in demanding an end to violence and the economic injustice that fuels it.

Date: Friday, Dec. 19th

Time: 12:00 – 2:00pm

Forum Venue: Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR)
55 E. Jackson, Suite 2075

March to depart from ICIRR following the forum and end at the Federal Building (Jackson and Dearborn).

Speakers include: Maurice Carney, Executive Director, Friends of the Congo. Local politicians, Members of the Congolese Community, Representatives of the United African Organization, and more.

For more information contact:

Kelley Johnson, UAO - 312.949.9980 or Claude Bambi, CCC-DRC – 773.818.4904



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UNITY STATEMENT – Congo Global Action (www.congoglobalaction.org)

A historic opportunity is at hand for the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire).

The Congolese people have demonstrated their overwhelming commitment to the peaceful rebuilding of their country by participating in their first democratic election in more than 40 years.

Nonetheless, the DR Congo continues to suffer from what the United Nations calls “the world’s deadliest emergency” and faces massive obstacles to its reconstruction:

- More than 4 million Congolese have died since 1998 as a result of the war. Although “Africa’s first World War” officially ended in 2003, recent studies show that more than 1,000 people continue to die each day; almost half of these are children under the age of five. Most of these deaths are due to disease and malnutrition and are easily preventable.
- Rebel groups, militias, and oftentimes the underpaid and poorly-trained Congolese armed forces continue to kill, torture, rape, enslave, loot, and harass populations. Sexual violence in the DR Congo remains a daily threat for women and girls living in war-affected areas. Nationwide, the justice and security instruments remain largely dysfunctional and corrupt.
- Vast quantities of mineral wealth are smuggled and exported from the DR Congo every year without benefit to the Congolese people. The UN has accused all nations involved in the conflict of using the war as a cover for this looting. Networks of armed groups, elites, corporations, governments and Congolese civil and military officials control and pilfer diamonds, gold, cobalt, tin, copper and other natural resources. We benefit daily from the use of the DR Congo’s looted riches such as coltan, a vital component of our computers, cell phones, and home gaming systems.

The collective response to this crisis remains gravely insufficient.

The DR Congo government must establish and maintain peace throughout all its provinces. It also must restore basic services, help millions of people return safely home and resume their livelihoods, set up efficient and trusted security and judiciary institutions, and organize economic usage of natural resources for the benefit of the Congolese. The people of the DR Congo must be empowered to hold their government accountable. The international community must provide adequate and sustained support for these efforts in order to save lives, keep people safe, and end economic exploitation.

As humanitarian, human rights, environmental and faith-based organizations, students, Congolese, and grassroots movements, we come together to advocate for the DR Congo and urge increased local and international response, beginning with our own communities and institutions.

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