

RELEASE IN PART
B1,1.4(B),1.4(D),B5,B6

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Wendy is now on a plane. Below is the latest from Reuben Brigety, who she asked to spearhead this effort.

Start Report

I have been in touch with many colleagues in the last couple of hours regarding further steps that MONUSCO could take to protect civilians in eastern DRC. Specifically, I have spoken with:

- A/S Carson (now in Kampala)
- USAID DCHA AA Nancy Lindborg
- US Ambassador to DRC Amb. Jim Entwistle • USUN (W) Deputy Rexion Ryu • State IO DAS Tori Holt

Further, Rexion Ryu has been in touch with Amb. DeLaurentis at USUN (New York).

B5

Relevant points re: the civilian protection issues in eastern DRC are as follows:

- A/S Carson, AA Lindborg and DAS Holt all agree [redacted] that MONUSCO, as currently equipped and postured, likely would not be able to defend such safe havens [redacted]. That said, a credible provider of security could deter the M23 and bring greater stability to Eastern DRC if done in concert with the neighbors and the government of the DRC. Certainly creation of greater security could protect more civilians, but safe havens are difficult and require key political and/or military elements to be in place to ensure their viability.

- UN head of peacekeeping Ladsous reports to Amb. DeLaurentis that he has issued orders to MONUSCO to do everything in its ability to protect civilians. UNPKO reports that any vulnerable group/population that MONUSCO has identified has either been airlifted out or brought into their compound for safety. MONUSCO is actively patrolling in Goma [redacted]

B1
1.4(B)
1.4(D)

[redacted] He also noted that the current commanding officer is the #2 in command, a UK Major General because the Indian FC has had to return to India [redacted]. [redacted]

- While DAS Holt confirmed that State/IO believes that the current mandate of MONUSCO would permit them to take more robust actions to protect civilians, the way that the mandate is interpreted [redacted] [redacted] has previously led MONUSCO to take a much more conservative approach. MONUSCO's mandate is very robust, more so than most peacekeeping missions with Chapter VII authority. [redacted]

- Specifically, Amb. Entwistle observes that MONUSCO leadership in DRC currently views their mandate as directing them to work ALONGSIDE the FARDC to protect Congolese civilians. Thus, when the FARDC withdrew from Goma during the M23 assault, MONUSCO's interpretation of their mandate [redacted] [redacted] led MONUSCO not to defend Goma from the M23 advance.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

AA Lindborg notes that USAID partners and contacts on the ground report that protection needs in Eastern Congo since the M23 offensive do not appear to be substantially greater than what they have generally been [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The dynamic that USAID partners/contacts have been observing is that if people are able to flee (some are unable to flee quickly enough given the speed of the rebel advance), they often return home after the M23 takes territory or moves on to their next objective. Finally, AA Lindborg notes that there are sufficient humanitarian supplies in the region to deal with prevailing humanitarian needs so long as supply routes are not cut off by various fighting forces. Relief agencies held a coordination meeting in Goma yesterday morning (23 November) and agreed upon a strategy for relief efforts in the immediate term. Agencies will conduct limited distributions to new arrivals of IDPs in the Goma area, to include 3-day rations of food and basic relief items. This strategy appears in line with USAID/OFDA's analysis that displacement would most likely be very short-term in nature, and a robust response is not currently indicated. Relief agencies are also reviewing options to support civilian transportation as many IDPs in/around Goma have been requesting assistance to return home.

This view of the humanitarian situation is notwithstanding some reports of human rights abuses by all parties to the conflict, to include the FARDC. Indeed, Amb. Carson reported that he ran into UNSG Chief of Staff Susana Malcorra at the airport in Entebbe, Uganda. Malcorra noted that the M23 was "relatively well-behaved" in Goma.

UNSG Ban, the D/SG, Susanna Malcorra and Ladsous are meeting on Sunday in NY (Malcorra will have just returned from the region) to evaluate next steps, including what more MONUSCO might do.

This represents the latest information from the sources noted above. Please let us know if you have further questions.