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From: "AfricaFiles" <info@africafiles.org>

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Subject: 'DR CONGO - Urgent Appeal for More UN Intervention' -- Central Region

TITLE: DR CONGO - Urgent Appeal for More UN Intervention

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SOURCE: justinpabu@hotmail.com

SOURCE WEBSITE: www.africafiles.org/central.asp

SUMMARY & COMMENT: An Urgent Emergency Appeal to all subscribers of all sections of Africafiles for advocacy with your government for rapid strengthening of the UN force (MONUC) in Bunia, and Ituri (Eastern Congo).

Serious comparisons are made to the past killings in Rwanda and Congo Brazzaville. Please E-mail today these requests to your government;

1) TAKE DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES AT THE UN TO STRENGTHEN THE MONUC FORCE 2.)

OFFER TROOPS NOW TO THE UN FOR CONGO

3) CONTRIBUTE MUCH MORE MONEY TO STRENGTHEN THE UN MISSION.

see below for background and addresses. PLEASE ACT. JK

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Canadian contacts are

P.M Jean Chretien <pm@pm.gc.ca> Foreign Affairs: Bill Graham

<grahab@parl.gc.ca>

please send bcc to info@africafiles.org

for background see the web page of africafiles for recent articles on the situation:

www.africafiles.org/central.asp

Current fighting in Bunia region of Ituri which has been going on for many many months has reached alarming proportions. Thousands have already died.

The tiny UN force (MONUC) has a mandate to protect civilians but has only 700 troops. Canadian General Romeo Delaire estimated , on a CBC documentary May 15th, that 20,000-30,000 are needed as soon as possible, pointing out many alarming parallels to the situation he was in in Rwanda in 1993, as head of the UN force there.

The documentary described the 4m. deaths in Congo since 1999 as the worst death total in a war since the Second World War. A Human Rights Watch spokesperson bemoaned the fact that the CONGO KILLINGS DO NOT EVEN MAKE PAGE 10, LET ALONE THE FRONT PAGE OF NEWSPAPERS In the CBC documentary we saw flashbacks to 1993 and after of Kofi Annan confessing the lack of political will that

allowed the Rwanda genocide to happen, and Bill Clinton saying it must never happen again. Delaire described the world's reaction then and now as fundamentally racist. He pointed out that it is never too late to intervene.

THIS IS A CALL FOR MORE INTERVENTION BY THE UN

ITS A CALL TO MEMBER GOVERNMENTS TO PROVIDE THE UN THE MEANS AND THE WILL TO DO SO EFFECTIVELY AND URGENTLY.

PLEASE WRITE TODAY TO YOUR RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES.

Some Canadian NGO's active and informed on Congo over many years have been consulted and support this action, which supports their on-going efforts with the government for more activity on the UN report on 'Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources by Multinational Companies, including Canadian; see www.africafiles.org/resourceextraction.asp contact dchesla@hotmail.com and for increased development and humanitarian support to Congo. Contacts: Table Ronde de Concertation sur le Congo. dtougas@web.ca & rshrop@pwrdf.org

BELOW IS a letter written today for AFRICAFILES to the Prime Minister (English summary first - then the original in French) from a Congolese civil society activist from the region, now resident in Toronto.

Toronto, May 16, 2003

To the Prime Minister of Canada:

Dear Hon. Jean Chretien:

There are many atrocities being committed all over the Eastern Congo, and more especially in Bunia.

I write to you in the name of people living in those regions.

I spent my best years in Ituri, and I can tell you that Ituri, like the rest of Eastern Congo, is a wonderful part of the country where many people would like to go, not simply as tourists but also to settle. I spent the best 4 years of my life there when I was studying theology, and I went back several times to lead study sessions on Human Rights for 'le Groupe Justice et Liberation' in Kisangani. I experienced the people as having a touching sense of hospitality, with the normal desires for peaceable living together, for bringing up their children, and then to die one day from old age in a blessed land.

My letter is an echo of the loud clamour of men women and children of Ituri who are asking for international protection. I'm sure this clamour has already reached you, and I don't doubt you will take concrete initiatives to lead the Canadian government in searching for solutions and especially for bringing peace in Ituri

Please Mr. Prime Minister, in the name of all that is beautiful and good in this land of Canada where I have chosen to live, and in the name of all that contributes to the greatness and pride of Canada, I beg you do something for Congo.

My people have their faults, but they are a great people in the Central African region. If Congo is stable, I assure you that all the other countries in the region will be stable too.

In the name of the women and children of all the peoples there – Hema ,Lendu, Tutsi, Hutu, Nande, Kagwa,Lugbara and others, I beseech you, HELP THE CONGO.

I am quite ready to come to Ottawa and meet Canadian authorities and give my suggestions for possible approaches to the situation. I shall be grateful for all that you can do for my fellow Congolese citizens..

For Group for Justice and Liberation, Kisangani and for Africafiles. Toronto.

Abbe Pabu Justin

justinpabu@hotmail.com

(french original)

16 Mai/2003

Mr l'Abbe Pabu Justin

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A Mr. Jean Chretien

Premier Ministre du Canada

RE: SOS au nom de tous les miens

Excellence Mr le Premier Ministre,

Dans un pays comme la RDC, il ne viendrait a l'esprit de personne d'ecrire directement au Premier Ministre, fut-ce pour une extreme urgence. Quelqu'un qui ose le faire doit s'armer de patience et de courage parce qu'une lettre au premier Ministre n'arrive jamais a destination. Ou quand elle arrive, elle a deja subi toutes les censures du monde, et tres souvent un secretaire decide de la jeter a la poubelle comme une impertinence. Au Canada , Dieu merci , nous pouvons nous permettre d'ecrire au Premier Ministre et etre sur que la lettre lui parviendra et qu'il repondra avec diligence. Je suis sur que vous avez acces a l'information sur les atrocites qui se commettent dans tout l'Est de la Republique Democratique du Congo, et plus particulierement a Bunia. Je vous ecris au nom des populations vivant dans ces regions. Monsieur le Premier Ministre, j'ai passé mes meilleures annees en Ituri et je peux vous dire que l'Ituri , comme du reste tout l'Est du Congo , c'est un coin merveilleux ou beaucoup de gens au monde aimeraient aller , non pas simplement en passant comme touristes , mais aussi s'etablir. J'y ai passé le meilleur de mes annees quand je faisais mes etudes de Theologie (4 ans) et j'y suis retourne a

plusieurs reprises pour animer des sessions sur les droits humains. J'y ai cotoyé des gens d'une cordialité touchante et qui ne pensent qu'à vivre en paix, élever leurs enfants et mourir un jour de vieillesse ou de maladie, sur une terre bénie. Ma lettre est un écho de l'immense clameur des hommes, des femmes et des enfants d'Ituri qui demandent la protection internationale. Je suis sûr que cette clameur vous est déjà parvenue et je ne doute pas que vous prendrez des initiatives concrètes pour amener le gouvernement du Canada à s'investir dans la recherche de solutions et surtout dans le maintien de paix en Ituri. S'il vous plaît, Mr Chretien, au nom de tout ce qu'il reste de beau et de bien, de grand et de bon dans ce pays où j'ai élu domicile, au nom de tout ce qui fait la grandeur et la fierté du Canada, je vous en conjure, faites quelque chose pour le Congo. Mon peuple a des défauts, mais, a la réflexion, c'est un grand peuple en Afrique Centrale. Si le Congo est stable, je vous assure que tous les pays de la région vont l'être. Au nom des femmes et des enfants Hema, Lendu, Tutsi, Hutu, Nande, Kagwa, Lugbara et autres, je vous en supplie, aidez le Congo. Je suis disposé à venir à Ottawa pour rencontrer les autorités Canadiennes et donner mes suggestions sur une possible approche de la situation. Je vous serais infiniment gré pour tout ce que vous ferez au nom de tous les miens que sont les populations du Congo.

Pabu Justin
Pour le Groupe Justice et Libération, Kisangani
Pour AfricaFiles, Toronto

DISCLAIMER:

The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the members of the Africafiles Collective.

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is a network of volunteers committed to promoting human rights and economic justice in Africa and to hearing African perspectives and alternative analyses for viable human development in Africa.

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