

# ZAIRE

## INCITING HATRED

### Violence Against Kasaiens in Shaba

I tell you and I repeat it with force: Peace and Unity, count on me. I will always fight for them.

President Mobutu Sese Seko  
March 1993<sup>1</sup>

The Kasaiens are foreigners. Katanga is certainly a hospitable land, but the foreigners must not forget their status.

Governor Kyungu wa Kumwanza November 6,  
1991<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *Jeune Afrique*, March 4-10, 1993, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Ligue des Droits de L'Homme (Zaire), Rapport sur l'Etat des Libertés dans la Province du Shaba* (July 1992) ("Human Rights League Report"), p. 22.

## **INTRODUCTION**

**For three years, President Mobutu Sese Seko has blocked a peaceful movement for democratic change in Zaire.<sup>3</sup> His efforts to divide opposition to his rule are now bearing fruit as ethnic and regional violence emerge in a number of regions throughout the vast central African country.**

**In the mineral rich region of Shaba, a government inspired campaign of terror is threatening the lives and livelihoods of tens of thousands of Zairians who have their roots in the neighboring regions of East and West Kasai.<sup>4</sup> Under the guise of promoting the interest of Shaban natives--or "Katangese" as they call themselves<sup>5</sup>--Mobutu's regional representatives have demonized the substantial Kasaien community, singled out prominent Kasaiens for attacks and raised a youth militia to reclaim the wealth of the region for its "original" inhabitants.**

**More than 100,000 Kasaiens have already been displaced from their homes in the major copper mining cities of Likasi and Kolwezi since November 1991, and most were displaced since August 1992. As many as 90,000 were displaced by mob violence in Kolwezi in the latter half of March 1993. Thousands more have had to flee smaller towns and villages of Shaba. The belongings of the displaced have been destroyed by mobs or seized by neighbors, their homes have been burned, and many have died. When representatives of Africa Watch visited Shaba in late March and early April 1993, the violence was continuing to spread while the government-controlled media fanned the flames of the conflict and politicians claimed they were powerless to respond.**

**Although there are historical roots to the animosity between Katangese and Kasaiens, the recent explosion of violence is largely explained by President Mobutu Sese Seko's continuing struggle to hold on to power. Throughout his nearly 28 years of rule, President Mobutu has promoted himself as the peacemaker and held out the threat of chaos if he were forced to depart. It is no coincidence that the recent violence in Shaba came at precisely the moment when the President was forced to accept the appointment of an opposition prime minister. The reaction was all the more violent since the prime minister--Etienne Tshisekedi--belongs to the Luba ethnic group of Kasai, who are the objects of the violence in Shaba.**

## **ORIGINS OF THE CONFLICT**

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<sup>3</sup> For an overview of the repression of the movement for popular change and the events in Zaire through July 1992, see Africa Watch, *Zaire: Two Years Without Transition*, Vol. 4, Issue 9, July 7, 1992.

<sup>4</sup> The violence in Shaba is defined regionally, although there is a strong ethnic component. The regions of Shaba and the two Kasais are ethnically diverse. However, the vast majority of Kasaiens in Shaba belong to the *Luba* ethnic group. In the view of many Katangese and Kasaiens interviewed by Africa Watch, the war against Kasaiens is primarily a war against the Luba of Kasai ("Luba-Kas").

<sup>5</sup> The region of Shaba was known as Katanga during the period of Belgian colonial rule and early independence. Mobutu suppressed the old name and rebaptized the region "Shaba," meaning "copper" in Swahili. The name change was part of Mobutu's authenticity campaign beginning in 1971. The old name largely disappeared from usage except among "Katangese" separatists. Since 1990, the old name has come back into common usage.

**The Shaba region is home to Gecamines—the state copper, cobalt and zinc industries—which were, until recently, responsible for 70%-75% of Zaire's foreign earnings. Shaba has always been a political flashpoint in Zairian history. Backed by Belgian interests, Moïse Tshombe declared the region independent in 1960. In 1963, the independent state of Katanga was reintegrated into the Congolese state. Then, in 1977 and 1978, the rebaptized "Shaba" region was the focus of two armed rebellions. The rebellions, which were suppressed primarily by Western intervention,<sup>6</sup> were the most significant military threats to the Mobutu regime since he seized control of the government in a 1965 coup.**

**A large minority of the people living in Shaba trace their modern roots to other regions of the country. Although the available statistics are extremely unreliable, there are approximately five million people living in Shaba.<sup>7</sup> Of that number, as many as one million may come from neighboring Kasai. The proportion of Kasaiens living in the major cities is higher. Two out of five residents of Lubumbashi are thought to be Kasaien. The proportions are believed to be slightly less in Kolwezi and Likasi.<sup>8</sup>**

**During the colonial period, the Belgian colonizers actively recruited laborers from other regions to work the new copper mines of Katanga and the infrastructure which they required. Many of the laborers were Luba of Kasai. The Luba actually trace their origins to Shaba, where there remains a substantial Luba population. However, the split between the two communities—several generations before colonialism—created strong distinctions between the "Luba-Kas" (Luba of Kasai) and the "Luba-Kat" (Luba of Katanga).**

**The Luba-Kas thrived in Shaba, where the colonial industries provided room, board and schooling to the young. They came to occupy the majority of positions in middle and, eventually, upper management. Poorer Kasaiens dominated much of the local trade. Although they fully integrated into Katangan society, living together in the same neighborhoods and speaking the lingua franca of Swahili, the Kasaiens maintained a separate identity, and often kept their ties to Kasai. Conflict with Kasaiens erupted soon after**

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<sup>6</sup> In 1977, in what is known as Shaba I, French jets flew in Moroccan paratroopers to bail out the Mobutu regime from a rebellion by the Front for the National Liberation of the Congo, which crossed into Shaba from Angola. In 1978, in Shaba II, French and Belgian paratroopers with U.S. air support rescued the regime in Shaba from another rebellion by the Front for the National Liberation of the Congo. Rather than defend the government, Mobutu's soldiers conducted waves of looting and murder during their disorderly retreat.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Ngondo a Pitshandenge, Léon de Saint Moulin and Tambashe Oleko, "La population du Zaire à la veille des élections de 1993 et 1994", *Zaire Afrique*, October 1992 (no. 268), p. 487.

<sup>8</sup> The population estimates range greatly. Governor Kyungu indicated to the *Conseil National des Organisations Non-Gouvernementales de Développement du Zaire* ("CNONGD") that there were only about 200,000 Kasaiens in the region, which is clearly a low estimate. The President of the Kasaien Community (Kasai Occidental) estimated the number of Kasaien families in the major cities as 80,000 in Lubumbashi, 25,000 in Likasi and 15,000 in Kolwezi. Each family is estimated to represent eight people. Although slightly exaggerated, this is generally consistent with perceptions communicated to Africa Watch by residents in each of the three cities. In its report, the CNONGD, suggested that as many two out of five residents of Shaba were originally from Kasai. CNONGD, *Violence Ethniques au Shaba et Aggravation de la Famine dans les Deux Kasai: Rapport sur la situation et proposition d'actions*. September 1992 ("CNONGD Report"), p. 43.

independence. In 1961, the separatist government of Moïse Tshombe mounted a campaign against Kasaiens—who tended to favor national unity—that eventually led to the departure of more than 70,000 from a U.N. refugee camp in Lubumbashi (then Elizabethville) to Northern Katanga and the Kasais.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, the flow of Kasaiens into Shaba began again after reunification.

President Mobutu did nothing to disrupt the colonial pattern of reliance on "foreigners" in Shaba. In fact, particularly after the Shaba wars, he deliberately placed Zairians from other regions—especially his own region of Equateur—in key army and administration positions in Shaba. The effect often expressed by Kasaiens and Katangese residents was that they lived under a foreign occupation force. While the predominant position of the Kasaiens was frequently a source of tension, it was largely subsumed by shared opposition to Mobutu and the clique of leaders imposed from Equateur.<sup>10</sup>

When open opposition political activity began again in 1990, after a nearly 25-year hiatus, the leaders from Shaba quickly joined together with the opposition to President Mobutu. Two of the most important figures in Shaba politics, Jean Nguz a Karl-i-Bond and Gabriel Kyungu wa Kumwanza, joined forces in the *Union des Fédéralistes et des Républicains Indépendants* (UFERI). Nguz was one of the best known politicians of the Mobutu era. He made a spectacular series of flip-flops between 1978 and 1986, going from prime minister to opposition in exile before he returned to the Mobutu fold in 1985 and was appointed ambassador to Washington and then foreign minister. He remained as foreign minister until April 1990, when he re-joined the opposition and became one of its most vociferous spokesmen.

In contrast to Nguz, Kyungu has had a far more modest career, based primarily in Shaba. Kyungu was allied with Etienne Tshisekedi when he first emerged as an opponent of Mobutu in the late 1970s. Kyungu was one of the first public figures to speak out against the attack on students at the University of Lubumbashi in May 1990. After that, according to many Shaba residents, he gained genuine popularity with his viciously anti-Mobutu speeches delivered in colorful, colloquial Swahili.

The opposition to President Mobutu remained unified in what came to be known as the "Sacred Union" from April 1990 until the fall of 1991. While Mobutu called for immediate elections under his control, the Sacred Union called for a National Conference to prepare the transition to democracy and backed the candidacy of Etienne Tshisekedi, Mobutu's best known opponent and himself a Luba from Kasai, to guide the transition.

In November 1991, UFERI broke ranks with the Sacred Union and allied itself with President Mobutu; Nguz a Karl-i-Bond was named prime minister and Kyungu wa Kumwanza became governor of Shaba. Almost immediately, Governor Kyungu shifted his attacks from President Mobutu to the "enemy within," i.e.,

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<sup>9</sup> Les Dossiers du C.R.I.S.P., *Congo 1962*, p. 392 (1963). There are striking similarities between the events of 1961 and those of today, particularly in the manipulation behind the ethnic violence. See Conor Cruise O'Brien, *To Katanga and Back*, pp. 238-246 (1962). The flight of the Kasaiens led O'Brien to suggest that "tribes may now usually be able to get along well enough, except when it is in someone's financial interest to set them fighting." *Ibid.* at 238.

<sup>10</sup> The massacre of students at the University of Lubumbashi in May 1990, which was one of the key events in bringing about pressure for political change (see *Two Years Without Transition*) was primarily a rampage by students and security forces from Equateur against other students.

**the Kasaien population of Shaba. Many Katangese, worn out by the political deadlock and the increasing impoverishment, responded positively to the governor's attack.**

**The attacks by Governor Kyungu and other UFERI leaders extended to the "Kasaien domination" of the opposition to President Mobutu. Before long, Katangese were justifying their alliance with a "dying dictator"—Mobutu—in order to block a "permanent dictatorship" of Kasaiens. Meanwhile, President Mobutu helped to support that perception by letting Nguz and Kyungu operate freely, while Mobutu kept a personal distance from the events in Shaba. He has rarely intervened openly. Though he continues to control the army, he has not used it to stop the violence in Shaba and protect civilians.**

### **PHASE I: "ARISE KATANGA"**

**Soon after he joined forces with Mobutu, Governor Kyungu consolidated control over local radio and television, restricted opposition political activity, stopped the flow of national newspapers and blocked trade with neighboring Kasai.**

**The movement against Kasaiens began with a campaign known as "*Debout Katanga*" ("Arise Katanga"), which was launched by the governor immediately after he assumed office. Its motto was "Katanga for the Katangese," but its tenor was largely anti-Kasaien. In a series of public rallies and speeches described to Africa Watch by local residents, the governor blamed the Kasaiens for most of the miseries faced by the Katangese.<sup>11</sup> "The Kasaiens are foreigners," he said at a rally on November 6, 1991. "Katanga is certainly a hospitable land, but the foreigners must not forget their status."<sup>12</sup> The governor blamed Kasaiens for the collapse of mineral production, the rise in food prices, and even the pillaging that swept the country in the fall of 1991.<sup>13</sup> In an interview that the governor chose to broadcast on local television, Governor Kyungu told the BBC that the Kasaiens were "warlike, dishonest, power hungry and arrogant."<sup>14</sup>**

**The new administration began a witch hunt for Kasaiens in positions of importance. In May 1992, Kitanika Wenda, the urban commissioner in the Likasi area, which is the highest administrative official in the region, wrote to the governor with a list of local state services headed by non-Katangese, together with their names. Africa Watch obtained a copy of the letter and viewed the four pages of names which followed. In the letter, Kitanika notes that Kasaiens occupy the most important positions. He continues:**

**Because it is they in particular who pose a problem and serve as support for that ethno-tribalistic-regionalist party well known for blocking our actions [the opposition UDPS party**

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<sup>11</sup> Africa Watch interviews in Lubumbashi March 27-29 and April 1, 1993.

<sup>12</sup> *Ligue des Droits de l'Homme (Zaire), Rapport sur l'Etat des Libertés dans la Province du Shaba* (July 1992) ("Human Rights League Report"), p. 22.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* This has been confirmed by Kasaien and Katangese witnesses in Shaba.

<sup>14</sup> BBC, *Focus on Africa*, Jan.-March 1993, Vol. 4 No. 1.

of Tshisekedi, it would be judicious to replace them right away with native (Katangese).<sup>15</sup>

In interviews with Kasaiens in the Likasi area and in other documents obtained by Africa Watch, the urban commissioner is mentioned frequently. Kasaiens in Likasi refer to him as the "broom." He is widely believed to have played a fundamental role in organizing the violence that struck Likasi between August and November.

Many Kasaiens were removed from their jobs, presumably because of their origins. However, it has been impossible to confirm how many of those who figured on the Kitanika list were actually fired.

### **Shock-troops**

The attacks on Kasaiens and the promotion of Katangese interests took the form of a campaign for "regional purity" throughout Shaba. The governor went so far as to create a vigilante force to protect Katangese interests in the towns and villages. Borrowing a tactic long used by Mobutu, the governor turned the youth wing of the party, "JUFERI,"<sup>16</sup> into a security and intelligence apparatus. With the clear approval of local officials, JUFERI members took up guard positions in towns and at the entrance to state companies like Gecamines. Despite a formal ban on political activity in the work place, the Kasaien employees at Gecamines-Kolwezi complained that JUFERI operated openly and officially in the plant.<sup>17</sup>

In Lubumbashi, residents told Africa Watch that JUFERI's role differed somewhat; its members were more discreet, appearing only during rallies and political maneuvers. However, they are widely believed to perform an intelligence role for the governor and were implicated in several attacks on newspaper vendors and opposition journalists in April 1992.<sup>18</sup>

The members of JUFERI were described by many Katangese, including those opposed to Governor Kyungu, as well-intentioned youth responding to the call of the governor. "It was part of (Kyungu's) campaign to raise the consciousness of Katangans," a member of a local humanitarian organization told Africa Watch. "He called on the youth to 'come forward to protect the wealth of the region.' He didn't need to say 'from whom' we needed to protect the wealth."<sup>19</sup>

The JUFERI members are not paid for their work, though, as many residents told Africa Watch, they work with the promise that once the Kasaiens are gone, they will inherit the jobs. "The governor doesn't

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<sup>15</sup> Letter of Kitanika Wenda, urban commissioner, Likasi, May 27, 1992.

<sup>16</sup> JUFERI stands for *Jeunesse* or "youth" of UFERI. Before 1990, the JMPR or *Jeunesse* of the sole party, the *Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution* (MPR) played the part of both shock troops and intelligence forces for the sole party, the MPR.

<sup>17</sup> See below, discussion of Likasi and Kolwezi.

<sup>18</sup> See below, Suppression of Free Speech.

<sup>19</sup> Africa Watch interview in Lubumbashi, March 28, 1993.

exactly promise each one of them a job," a member of the Human Rights League told Africa Watch, "but they get the message that once the Kasaiens are gone, the jobs will remain for them."<sup>20</sup> Witnesses told Africa Watch that JUFERI members are usually unarmed and relatively orderly. One witness told Africa Watch that the JUFERI brigade that controlled access to the neighborhood of Kambove outside Likasi was stopping travellers and demanding pay-offs.<sup>21</sup> This is such a common occurrence in Zaire, however, that it hardly distinguishes JUFERI.<sup>22</sup>

The JUFERI are not officially linked with the mobs that recently expelled the great mass of Kasaiens from their homes in towns like Likasi and Kolwezi, although the distinction is not always clear. The actual "shock-troops" of the Kasaien expulsion do not have any acknowledged affiliation. As the Catholic Bishops warned in a public appeal for mutual understanding:

We know that drugged youth exist in our region. These young people are subjected to strange and bizarre rituals (Bizaba). All dialogue with them is impossible...We cannot but shake in the face of such a situation.<sup>23</sup>

Depending on the town, the youth bands are known simply as the "Jeunesse Katangaise" (Katangese Youth) or the "Enfants Perdus du Katanga" (Lost Children of Katanga). Witnesses described them to Africa Watch as mobs ranging in age from about 16 to 25. They wear red arm or head bands and shout slogans in Swahili and Kiluba, the language of the Luba-Kat.<sup>24</sup> As the Bishops' declaration indicates, they are widely thought to depend on drugs, alcohol and ritual "fetishes."

Although the Katangese youth bands appear as an unorganized rabble, residents insisted to Africa Watch that they could not function without support from the official administration. They noted that the youth come from different villages, their movement is systematic and organized, and their attacks are often accompanied by JUFERI activists and vehicles carrying gasoline to burn houses.<sup>25</sup> The Association for the Defense of Human Rights ("AZADHO") has reported that the Katangese youth are recruited by UFERI from

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<sup>20</sup> Discussions with members of the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme (Zaire), Lubumbashi chapter, April 1, 1993.

<sup>21</sup> Africa Watch interview with Kasaien former resident of Kambove, Likasi, March 30, 1993.

<sup>22</sup> Soldiers and Gendarmes frequently stop vehicles passing in the streets and demand pay-offs, as do a variety of others. In March 1993, Africa Watch representatives in Shaba were stopped at road blocks set up by soldiers, by people claiming to have made street repairs and by others needing money for a funeral.

<sup>23</sup> *Message des Evêques de la Province Ecclesiastique de Lubumbashi aux Chrétiens Catholiques et aux Hommes de Bonne Volonté: "Appel aux population du Katanga,"* November 30, 1992.

<sup>24</sup> Some of the slogans recalled to Africa Watch included the rhyming slogan, "Ponanayi Ba Kasai" (Swahili for, "Let's beat the Kasaiens") and Twafile Ntanda Yashile Bangkambur (Kiluba for, "Lets die for the land that our ancestors have given us.")

<sup>25</sup> Africa Watch interviews with residents from Lubumbashi, Likasi and Kolwezi, March 27-April 1, 1993. See below, discussions of Likasi and Kolwezi.

villages across Katanga and trained at locations in Mitwaba, Kambove, Asainkolobwe, Kudelungu, Manono, Lwena and Fungurume.<sup>26</sup> Local Kasaiens allege that JUFERI and the administration are providing the organization with the drugs and gasoline that figure prominently in the attacks.

The hazy relationship between the JUFERI, the government and the youth mobs is not surprising. For many years, the Mobutu government has blamed violence against political opponents on over zealous youth. In a famous speech frequently rebroadcast during the late 1980s, President Mobutu exhorted the youth to take justice into their own hands, citing with approval the brutal suppression of a small demonstration of women in the streets of Kinshasa. When you see people demonstrating, he told the youth, don't wait for the authorities: "If you have shoes on your feet, kick them! If you have hands, slap them!"<sup>27</sup>

The appearance of mystery, or even chaos, behind official violence has also been a characteristic of the Mobutu regime. Acts of violence that were later linked to specialized security divisions were frequently attributed to "bandits," much as they are now attributed to "drug addicts."<sup>28</sup>

In any event, the perpetrators of the violence in Shaba have benefitted from complete impunity. According to the report of a military commander in Likasi, government authorities pressured gendarmes to release perpetrators who were arrested during violence there. There has been no serious effort to pursue those who burned homes or took property. Even where the perpetrators of specific acts of violence were identified, as in the case of pharmacist Kasumbi Ilunga, who was killed during the violence in Likasi, there has been no prosecution.

The violence began in small towns and villages soon after the governor assumed office in the fall of 1991. Toward the end of the year and the beginning of 1992, there were reports of violence aimed at Kasaiens in the towns of Pueto, Biowa-lez-Bukama, Kapolowe, Kasenga and Kipushi. The most significant incident occurred in Fungurume, one of the principal mining cities of Gecamines, where four people died and approximately 50 homes were destroyed. According to the Human Rights League, the incident began on January 1 when the home of a local Kasaien was burned by Katangese youth. The League, which sent a representative to investigate, put the blame on the "youth militia of the UFERI." On April 11, according to the League, members of JUFERI began systematically to expel Kasaiens from their homes. When some young Kasaiens fought back, the situation exploded in violence.<sup>29</sup>

### **Suppression of Free Speech**

<sup>26</sup> Association de Défense des Droits de l'Homme, (Association for the Defense of Human Rights), *Rapport sur les Evénements 15-16 Aout 1992 au Shaba (Katanga)*, p. 6. ("AZADHO Report").

<sup>27</sup> Televised speech of President Mobutu, originally delivered in April 1988 (exact date unknown). Video copy in possession of Lawyers Committee for Human Rights (New York, NY).

<sup>28</sup> A series of secret hit-squads were created during the 1980s and 1990s. Most notably they included the "*Force d'Intervention Spéciale*" during the late 1980s and the *Hibouxor* "owls" beginning in 1990. Their existence was denied by successive governments and their actions were attributed to bandits. *Zaire: Two years without Transition*, p. 35.

<sup>29</sup> Human Rights League Report, p. 45.



Throughout this time, the governor was also imposing his order on broadcast journalism, newspapers, and political opposition. The local television, which the governor controls completely, reports on all of his activities. He has used it, together with the pro-Katangese press, to promote himself and the Katangese cause. The Katangese press has contributed actively to the atmosphere of tension and anger directed against Kasaiens. While it is nominally independent from the governor, it is indistinguishable from the government media. Moreover, the pro-Kasaien press, which does exist in Lubumbashi, has been hampered by intimidation and attacks by JUFERI militants.

The newspapers regularly refer to Kyungu as a savior of Katangese, or as the "Katangese Mandela."<sup>30</sup> They excuse the governor for the violence that has erupted, blaming it on ill-intentioned provocateurs. At the same time, they promote stories of Kasaien deception and manipulation.

Recent articles in two Katangese newspapers, *Le Lushois* and *Le Katangais*, for example, blame the rise of prices on Kasaien manipulation of the currency, report that Kasaiens claiming to be refugees from Shaba are getting rich in South Africa, and attribute the lack of foodstuffs to "foreign" merchants in the markets. The following examples illustrate the press coverage:

- o Following the introduction of the five million zaire note in Shaba, the value of the zaire shot from 2.5 million = \$1 to 10 million = \$1 and all bills other than the new note disappeared from the market.<sup>31</sup> In an article accusing the opposition "UDPS and their henchmen of the Radical Sacred Union" of manipulating the currency, *Le Katangais* reported:

These sordid maneuvers are intended to damage the well-being of the Katangais people. This is the gift that the Kasaien has reserved for a hospitable people. [The Katangese people] has been a victim of treachery on its own soil.<sup>32</sup>

- o In an article on a similar theme, *Le Lushois* reported that the only solution was to "favor the emergence of a class of economic operators that is authentically Katangese; they must be devoted to the cause of their province. Isn't it said that one is best served by oneself?"<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> *Le Katangais* and *Le Lushois* are two of the pro-Kyungu newspapers cited. See *Le Lushois* March 15-25, 1993 and *Le Katangais* March 13, 1993.

<sup>31</sup> On each occasion that a new bill has been introduced into the largely bankrupt economy, it has created an immediate leap in inflation. On December 1, 1992, the central bank governor appointed by Mobutu, Nyembo Shabani, introduced the five million zaire bank notes over the objections of the Tshisekedi government. The same day, the Tshisekedi government declared the bills "null and void." Despite pressures by soldiers paid with the new bills, the population supported the government's position and the bill was effectively rejected in all regions of the country except Shaba and the President's region of Equateur and in Shaba.

<sup>32</sup> *Le Katangais*, p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> *Le Lushois*, p. 7.

o In an article praising the governor's record and, in particular, his recent efforts to bring down prices, *Le Lushois*, refers several times to the Katangese "Mandela" who "brandished the specter of a dictatorship of the UDPS and notably of Tshisekedi" and created "the work of art" that is UFERI.<sup>34</sup>

The Katangese newspapers also promote the perception of a Kasaien conspiracy to blame Katangese for what they claim is Kasaien violence. *Le Katangais* attributed the criticism of the Katangese to foreign media and international humanitarian groups in Shaba, including the UN High Commission for Refugees and "Médecins sans Frontières" which "are packed with a majority of Kasaiens." "While it is the Katangans who are the victims of ethnic rivalry, the western media pass [the Katangans] off as torturers of the Kasaiens."<sup>35</sup>

Meanwhile, the television has failed to report much of the violence against Kasaiens or has reported it in a way that supports the anti-Kasaien propaganda. When recent violence erupted in Kolwezi, leading to the expulsion of thousands of Kasaiens from their homes and jobs, the television merely reported that Kasaien workers had decided to strike at the local Gecamines plant. After claiming that production had doubled at the plant since the departure of the Kasaiens (an entirely unsubstantiated claim), the television report concluded with the words, "Bravo to the Katangese workers."<sup>36</sup>

Because of the absence of roads and telephone communication, Shaba is largely cut off from the capital of Kinshasa. Newspapers, which are the only independent source of information other than foreign radio broadcasts, can only reach Shaba by plane. This route has been largely cut off by officials in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi. Customs authorities have instituted strict control over the transport of newspapers that prevent all but a very few newspapers from the capital city from reaching Shaba.<sup>37</sup>

The governor also began cracking down on the few opposition newspapers which are published in Lubumbashi. According to the Human Rights League, youth bearing the symbols of the UFERI party seized and destroyed opposition newspapers in the central square of Lubumbashi on April 22, 23 and 24, 1992. They then turned on the editors and owners. The home of Leyka Mousa Nyembo, owner-editor of *Le Communicateur*, was ransacked and Mr. Leyka was expelled from his home soon afterwards. A number of other editors were also harassed. The League even identified the car frequently used by the JUFERI brigade together with its registration number.<sup>38</sup> However, no action has been taken against the perpetrators.

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* p. 4.

<sup>35</sup> *Le Katangais*, p. 5.

<sup>36</sup> Observed by representative of Africa Watch, March 29, 1993.

<sup>37</sup> When a representative of Africa Watch travelled from Kinshasa to Lubumbashi on March 27, 1993, he was searched for newspapers in Kinshasa and questioned together with other passengers on his arrival in Lubumbashi. Street vendors in Lubumbashi had only a few photocopies of one of the opposition newspapers from Kinshasa, *UMOJA*. According to the Zairian Human Rights League, the practice has been in effect for some time.

<sup>38</sup> Human Rights League Report, p. 26.

## **Repression of Political Opposition**

In consolidating the power of UFERI and the MPR, the authorities in Shaba have also cracked down on activities of other political parties. When opposition political figures sought to visit Shaba in 1992, roads were blocked, gatherings were violently broken up, and the homes of opposition members were ransacked. This was true of visits by two major political figures who are also natives of Shaba: Kibassa Maliba, an ally of Etienne Tshisekedi and a leader of the *Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social* (UDPS) and Charles Mwando Nsimba, leader of the break-away faction of UFERI that remained within the Sacred Union. Kibassa arrived in Lubumbashi on March 11, 1992 after a forced landing at the military base of Kamina in northern Shaba. The military violently dispersed crowds that had gathered at his home to greet his arrival. One person was killed and many were injured.

Two months later, a gathering held by Charles Mwando was prevented by local authorities and the homes of political allies were ransacked. Meanwhile, UFERI and other political formations associated with President Mobutu operate openly and hold public rallies.

## **Trade Embargo with Kasai**

Governor Kyungu also imposed official restrictions on trade with Kasai. The Kasaiens are largely dependent on foodstuffs that are grown in Shaba or imported through Shaba from other countries. In addition, Kasaien traders dominate local markets in Shaba. The governor put an embargo into effect soon after he arrived in office. According to the Human Rights League, the railways were prohibited from delivering stocks of food, including those purchased in advance. The embargo, which was to have ended at the end of 1991, continued afterwards in the form of special licenses for export. Anyone wishing to export products to areas outside Shaba must "request an authorization from the regional authority."<sup>39</sup> As of March 1992, according to the League, 25,000 tons of produce remained in warehouses in Lubumbashi, awaiting delivery to Kasai.

## **PHASE II: MASS EXPULSIONS**

In the period which followed Governor Kyungu's nomination in Shaba, violence against Kasaiens was sporadic and often met by resistance from the Kasaien community. This situation continued until August 15, 1992, when political developments in Kinshasa threatened the power of President Mobutu and the UFERI leadership. At this point, President Mobutu was forced to accept Etienne Tshisekedi as Prime Minister to replace Prime Minister Nguz. After Tshisekedi's nomination, the violence escalated and took the form of mass expulsions which have continued until today.

The process that led to Tshisekedi's nomination began early in 1992 when the Sacred Union, with massive popular and international pressure, succeeded in forcing President Mobutu to allow a National Conference to decide the future of the country. From that time on, Nguz Karl-i-Bond was largely isolated and powerless on the national scene. In August, the National Conference reached a compromise with Mobutu

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<sup>39</sup> Public Notice of the *Office des Chemins de Fer du Sud* reprinted in *Le Katangais*, March 4-13, 1993. According to the public notice, the rule is based on an official letter of the governor published December 14, 1992.

**that would permit him to remain in office long past the expiration of his term in December 1991 in exchange for a reduced role and delegation of real power to a prime minister named by the Conference. After a long hesitation, President Mobutu accepted Tshisekedi's nomination and immediately promoted Nguz to the position of special advisor in the president's office.**

**The nomination of Tshisekedi, which Mobutu had long resisted, was a particular blow to Prime Minister Nguz and the rest of UFERI leadership which had broken with the Sacred Union 10 months earlier. According to both Kasaiens and Katangese, the Kasaiens in Shaba were jubilant, and they organized marches of triumph throughout the cities of Shaba. Rumors quickly spread that the Kasaiens were preparing to seek vengeance against the Katangese and that the Tshisekedi government would replace Kyungu.**

**There is no doubt, according to all witnesses, that many Kasaiens took vengeful pleasure in the triumph of their candidate and engaged in acts of provocation aimed at their Katangese neighbors. According to some observers, Kasaiens marched dogs through the streets, wearing neck ties to symbolize Prime Minister Nguz and Governor Kyungu. According to UFERI members, the Kasaiens cut off the dogs' heads and let the blood run through the streets. But UFERI and Katangese youth were prepared in advance for an attack and violence only erupted once they challenged the demonstrators.**

**The situation in Lubumbashi was typical. Tshisekedi's nomination occurred on Saturday, August 15. A report by the National Board for Nongovernmental Development Organizations in Zaire (the "CNONGD Report") described the events as follows:**

**The day of Tshisekedi's election, the members of the UDPS and the entire Kasaien community descended into the streets of Lubumbashi to show their pleasure. The celebration lasted all day. According to concordant testimony, the UDPS sympathizers shouted slogans and chants hostile to Nguz and Kyungu; certain demonstrators went as far as to throw stones at the residence of Governor Kyungu. This was confirmed by the urban commissioner for Lubumbashi, Mr. Mulunga Kabuese Seya, who immediately decided to call out the forces of order to keep matters from getting out of control. The crowds were uncontrollable.**

**According to the president of the Kasaien community, Mr. Mukadi, in the afternoon, the governor of the region called together elements of JUFERI to respond. The first incidents took place following a face off of UDPS and UFERI activists. The anger of the Shabans [Katangese] reached its peak when some Kasaiens knotted ties around two dogs to symbolize the failure of Nguz and Kyungu. The UFERI activists couldn't stand the insult. Despite the intervention of the governor on the radio and television, calling for calm, the situation could not be controlled.<sup>40</sup>**

**According to the Zairian Human Rights Association, about 150 members of the "UFERI militia" under the control of a famous Katangese "gendarme," General Monga, descended on the homes of Kasaiens; the**

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<sup>40</sup> CNONGD Report, p. 7.

homes were looted and attacked, but no deaths were reported. According to the Human Rights Association, the militia were composed of young Baluba-Kat (Luba of Katanga) recruited primarily from the governor's home area and armed with machetes, knives and jugs of gasoline.<sup>41</sup>

Soldiers intervened against the youth militia. The CNONGD reported that four people were killed, including General Monga. AZADHO reported six deaths, all Katangese. The news spread quickly to surrounding villages, contributing to an already tense atmosphere.

On August 20, President Mobutu responded by sending Prime Minister Nguz to "examine the situation on the spot."<sup>42</sup> This was a cynical response by Mobutu, since it was well-known that Nguz was linked to the governor and was part of the problem. Not surprisingly, Nguz used the opportunity to further inflame passions. He was quoted by the official press as saying that "Shaba Province was entering the political opposition following the arrival of a prime minister of the Sacred Union at the head of a transitional government."<sup>43</sup> In a public declaration to the President of the National Conference a few days later, UFERI blamed the violence in Shaba on the acts of "provocation and humiliation" carried out by the "fanatics supporting the newly elected prime minister."<sup>44</sup>

The violence which followed Tshisekedi's nomination quickly took on a pattern. Youth bands of Katangese, armed with knives and machetes, sought out Kasaien homes. Neighbors cooperated in the process. The owners were hounded out and the crowd poured into the homes to take their belongings.<sup>45</sup> In some towns, soldiers or others arrived soon afterwards with cans of gasoline and the houses were set on fire. According to the CNONGD Report, 50 homes were destroyed in Lubumbashi, 26 in Kolwezi, 25 in Kamina and 6 in Sendoa. The vast majority of the homes pillaged and destroyed were owned by Kasaiens though a few Katangese homes were also pillaged. By early September the CNONGD Report estimated that there were about 1,000 displaced Kasaiens at the train station in Kamina, 600 in Luena and other 500 in Bukama. About 1,500 people were displaced in Lubumbashi.

There were not large numbers of fatalities; however, most of those who died in this phase were Katangese. According to the CNONGD Report, there were 19 deaths, 16 of which were Katangese killed by soldiers.

There is a great deal of confusion about the role of the army. There were units of soldiers or gendarmes (militarized police) that intervened on behalf of the Kasaiens, although the extent of the intervention is contested. Many Kasaiens told Africa Watch that soldiers had intervened to help Katangese mobs. UFERI claimed, in its declaration to the National Conference, that Kasaiens paid off soldiers to kill

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<sup>41</sup> AZADHO Report, p. 5.

<sup>42</sup> Zaire television, August 20, 1992, cited in BBC *Summary of World Broadcasts*(SWB), August 22, 1992.

<sup>43</sup> See SWB, ME/1468(ii) August 25, 1992, AFP report of August 21, citing official Zaire news agency (AZAP).

<sup>44</sup> Zaire Television, August 29, 1992, cited in SWB/ME/1473 B/5 August 31, 1992.

<sup>45</sup> Africa Watch interviews, March 27-April 1, 1993. See also, BBC, Focus on Africa, Jan-March 1993, p. 9.

**Katangese youth. In an interview with Belgian journalists on October 13, 1992, Nguz claimed that he had the support of 15,000 paramilitary police based in Shaba to stand up to the Tshisekedi government.<sup>46</sup>**

**As far as Africa Watch has been able to determine, the intervention of soldiers in order to stop the violence was largely ad hoc and insufficient. For many years, President Mobutu has divided military power among a variety of forces, ensuring that real power remained in the hands of elite troops under his sole command. The regular ground forces and gendarmes have been denied substantial training or weaponry in favor of these specialized forces which are composed primarily of soldiers from the president's region of Equateur.<sup>47</sup> These forces have been used in all recent cases where the government has suppressed anti-government activities, including the February 16, 1992 march in Kinshasa and the purported rebel activity near the Ugandan border in the spring of 1992.<sup>48</sup>**

**The absence of such forces before and after the outbreak of violence in Shaba can only be explained by a conscious decision on the part of the Mobutu government. Without support from either the local administration or the elite forces, it is not surprising that the regular forces were unable to keep order. The absence of such support after the outbreak of violence is even more telling, since it made it impossible for those expelled from their homes to return and reclaim their possessions. What is clear is that the elite forces capable of stopping the violence were never employed, except in Lubumbashi where violence after Tshisekedi's nomination was quickly suppressed.**

### **The Cleansing of Likasi: August 15—November 15**

**It was in the copper-mining city of Likasi that the pattern of attacks first developed into a full scale "ethnic cleansing." The population of Likasi is about 400,000 of whom approximately 150,000 may be Kasaien. The attacks began in August and continued intermittently through November, at which point the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) estimated the number of displaced Kasaiens at more than 60,000.**

**By the time that Tshisekedi was nominated prime minister in August, tensions were already high in Likasi because of the large influx of Kasaien refugees from nearby towns, including Fungurume.**

**On August 15, the day of Tshisekedi's nomination, soldiers clashed with young Katangese who had been gathering outside of town from early in the morning. A report of the military action against the Katangese described the Katangese as "drugged and overexcited."<sup>49</sup> The next day, according to the report,**

<sup>46</sup> "Former Zairian Premier Vows to Oppose Tshisekedi," Reuters, October 13, 1992.

<sup>47</sup> For a discussion of the various forces composing the Zairian military and specialized forces, see *Two Years Without Transition*. There are elements of the regular armed forces ("FAZ") based in Shaba, as well as units of the specialized divisions ("Garde Civile" and Special Presidential Division or "DSP"), composed primarily of soldiers from the President's region of Equateur. The specialized forces were not called in to stop the violence in Likasi or Kolwezi, for example.

<sup>48</sup> See, *Two Years Without Transition*.

<sup>49</sup> "Genese des événements qui secouent Likasi; Période du 15 Aout au 21 Septembre 1992" ("Military report"). The

the army did not have the means to keep the peace. In outlying areas, however, the youth bands attacked Kasaien homes and burned vehicles. While some Katangese were apparently arrested by the police, according to the military report, they "were all released on the demand of the crowds and the urban commissioner."<sup>50</sup>

In the course of the military actions, three Katangese were killed and 18 were injured. The funeral on August 20, which was attended by Nguz on mission for Mobutu, turned into a public occasion for threats against the Kasaiens. Witnesses told Africa Watch that hundreds of cars followed the funeral process and thousands of people were reported to have come on foot. According to the military report, "the youth of JUFERI picked fights, called for the departure of the Kasaiens and secession."<sup>51</sup> Nguz, himself, appeared unprepared for the violence of the crowds and left quickly without taking leave of the assembled notables.<sup>52</sup>

A relative calm returned to Likasi until the beginning of September. Around that time, the military began to note the arrival of young Katangese from surrounding villages. Rumors began to spread of an attack on Kasaiens to begin in the zone of Toyota. The violence began again on September 7 and spread to a number of neighborhoods, including Kakanda and Kambove. According to the military report, soldiers occupied the Toyota neighborhood on September 8-9. However, the urban commissioner complained to the military commander that soldiers were harassing the population and "stealing watches." On the morning of September 10, according to the military report, the neighborhood of Toyota was "in flames." The violence continued in Toyota for several days. When soldiers killed a Katangese youth, more Kasaien houses were burned in revenge. The Kasaiens took revenge by burning the market place.

Over the weekend of September 12-13, rumors began to circulate regarding an imminent attack on the neighborhood of Kitabataba. Monday morning, September 14, the attack on Kitabataba and Tshatshi began. Youth bands again attacked homes of Kasaiens. A curfew was declared from 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. and relative calm was returned.

The military report conveys an impression of the violence which was confirmed in nearly all of the testimony collected by Africa Watch. The report indicates that the youth mobs, frequently wearing red bands, were drugged and out of control. At the same time, the report expresses suspicion about the role of the administrative authorities, particularly the urban commissioner, Kitanika Wenda. "The political-administrative authorities who are of UFERI origin (sic.), very politicized, intervene each time to save the heads of their young, even when they are caught red-handed." Later, the report notes that the "impunity that

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author of the report appears, by the signature, to be the Commander of the Gendarmerie Battalion based in Likasi. The detailed, 12-page report is consistent with testimony collected by Africa Watch, though it is far more detailed and highlights the efforts by the army to stop the Katangese. Those efforts tended to be denigrated by Kasaiens interviewed by Africa Watch.

<sup>50</sup> Military Report, p. 3.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*.

**covers the JUFERI is astonishing."**

**The violence continued in Likasi through late September. By the beginning of October, newspapers in Kinshasa reported 32 deaths, 139 injuries and 360 homes destroyed.<sup>53</sup> Thousands of Kasaiens who were displaced fled to local military camps, the train station and the homes of friends. One of the last neighborhoods to be hit was the densely packed central neighborhood of Kikula (the former colonial *cité* where the indigenous population was forced to live), where many Kasaiens fled the first phases of the violence. The attacks in Kikula continued into early November. Eventually, most of the displaced Kasaiens gathered around the train station and the property of the Railway.**

**When representatives of the Belgian branch of MSF arrived in early October, they reported hearing about as many as 60 deaths a day from disease and malnutrition.<sup>54</sup> By early December, after relief efforts had been put into place, MSF told Africa Watch that there were still six to seven deaths a day, primarily children dying in an epidemic of measles and dysentery.**

**According to Frank Tanghe of MSF, MSF and the ICRC estimated the total number of displaced persons at about 68,000, of whom 37,000 were camped around the train station by March 1993. At the end of 1992, the regional government commissioned weekly passenger trains to bring the displaced persons to Kasai. The voyage took several days and many reportedly died along the way.<sup>55</sup> Since January, however, according to relief workers, there have been no further passenger trains.**

**Africa Watch interviewed refugees in the camp around the train station on March 30 and 31. About 14,000 people were living under small green plastic tents provided by MSF. The remainder were living in makeshift shacks, abandoned train cars, and open spaces around the train yard. All of those interviewed by Africa Watch had lived in Likasi for most of their lives. Many were born there. They lived in neighborhoods shared by Katangese and Kasaiens.**

**There stories were all similar. They were divided, however, on whether any of the military had played a positive role. A number of witnesses said that "Gendarmes" had participated in pillaging or blocked them from returning to their homes.**

- o One resident of Kitabataba who was spared direct violence because he was from Maniema (rather than Kasai) watched the violence unfold in the neighborhood from the month of August. He continues to live in Kitabataba though he was visiting friends in the camp. "I never saw soldiers intervene to help the Kasaiens," he said. "But I saw many Katangese Gendarmes encourage their brothers in the attacks."**
- o Kalonga Dominique, a father of eight, came to Shaba when he was four years old. He was**

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<sup>53</sup> *La Renaissance*, October 3-10, 1992.

<sup>54</sup> Africa Watch interview with Frank Tanghe, logistics technician for Médecins Sans Frontières, Likasi, March 31, 1993.

<sup>55</sup> Kenneth Noble, "Tens of Thousands Flee Ethnic Violence in Zaire," *The New York Times*, March 21, 1993.



temporarily away from Likasi in the fall, but returned on September 29 and went straight to the neighborhood of "Tennis" where he lived and where he had recently completed building a brick house. "I heard about the threats, but this was my neighborhood; everybody knew me," he said. Then on October 8, neighbors came to his house and told him that he would have to leave. At 8:00 p.m., a crowd of Katangese youth approached his home. They asked him where he was from. He said, Kasai. "They started to scream for the others, until one of the neighbors said, 'No, he is okay, let him go.' And then I left." He turned around to see neighbors carrying away his belongings. When calm returned to the neighborhood, he sent one of his children to talk to the neighbors. "They all turned against me. They said, if I came into the neighborhood, I would be killed." None of his belongings were returned to him. He has heard nothing from the four of his eight children who left for Kasai in the trains.<sup>56</sup>

- o One young student refugee came from the neighborhood of Kambove. His was one of the first neighborhoods hit by violence after August 15. He was born in Shaba. Most of his family succeeded in boarding the trains for Kasai. He was taken in at a dormitory run by Catholic brothers. His neighborhood of Kambove is now under the control of JUFERI guards. "I still go back there sometimes. But yesterday, my friends told me to stop coming; it wasn't safe anymore. Even though they knew me, they couldn't protect me."<sup>57</sup>
- o One woman left Kikula with her family on November 12. "Some Katangese came to our house that night and said, 'we had a meeting and decided you had to leave; your husband is holding UDPS meetings.' I said, 'no, its not true; its just that my husband was born here; he has a lot of friends.' They told me to get my husband. When he came, they said to him, 'we had a meeting and we decided that we are going to eat you—we are going to spread the meat all around Likasi.'" The family decided to take the hint and move to the train station.<sup>58</sup>
- o Another woman from Kikula interviewed by Africa Watch was not as lucky. She and her family left on November 8 as they were being pursued by a gang of Katangese carrying lances and machetes.

Those refugees who fled the area of Kikula in September all agreed that they could not possibly return even to walk through town in mid-day. One Kasaien who was born and raised in Likasi described to Africa Watch his terror as he drove through the neighborhood in December carrying a gun in his bag. "The people thought we were coming to look for a house and they told us, 'we just killed a Kasaien; you can have his house.'"<sup>59</sup>

The refugees from Kikula presented the clearest testimony of official collaboration in their

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<sup>56</sup> Africa Watch interview at Likasi train station, March 31, 1993.

<sup>57</sup> Africa Watch interview with student, Likasi, March 30, 1993.

<sup>58</sup> Africa Watch interview at the train station, March 31, 1993.

<sup>59</sup> Africa Watch interview with Steve Kazumba, Paris, May 6, 1993.

expulsion. Their homes were burned with gasoline which "mysteriously" appeared after the mobs invaded their homes. Many witnesses told Africa Watch that the gasoline was transported in an ambulance belonging to the state-owned central hospital, with the words, "Gift of Kuwait" printed on the side. Several witnesses also said that Gendarmes in uniform prevented them from returning to their homes, or actually escorted them away. A representative of Africa Watch briefly toured the main streets of Kikula in late March and saw the charred remains of dozens of houses that had been burned.

### **Continued Tension and Indifference**

In the aftermath of the violence, a relative calm has returned to Likasi. There have been no major attacks on the refugees themselves, though there has been continuing harassment of Kasaiens, wherever they have remained in school or in the work place.

Increasingly, however, the Katangese community has begun to express its resentment over the fact that the displaced Kasaiens have been taken in charge by international humanitarian organizations, which have begun to receive threats of violence if they do not stop their work. One letter was delivered to MSF while a group was touring the camp with representatives from Africa Watch and Zairian human rights organizations. The anonymous letter in Swahili threatened to burn the camps if MSF continued to support the Kasaiens: "Those who have ears will hear." The letter caused some concern because, according to Kasaien leaders in the camps, much of the violence in Likasi had been forewarned in the same manner. Frank Tanghe of MSF told Africa Watch: "For the extremist Katangese, helping the Kasaiens just goes too far."

Meanwhile, the national and regional authorities have made no effort either to resettle the Kasaiens in their homes or to help them to relocate to Kasai. Local church groups which have engaged in seeking a solution have found no support from any of the officials in Likasi or Lubumbashi. Kitanika Wenda, for example, was moved to a different district after the violence in Likasi. His replacement has told humanitarian groups that he does not have the political or financial means to resolve the problem. Church leaders told Africa Watch about their frustration in trying to get any action from local officials. The same church organized group was refused a meeting with the governor in Lubumbashi.<sup>60</sup>

Not surprisingly, there has not been any serious effort to investigate or prosecute those responsible for the violence. The judicial process is stalled, even where the crime and the criminals are known. A well known Kasaien pharmacist named Kasumbi Ilunga was killed soon after the conflict began in August 1992. The suspects, all Katangese, were arrested, but the prosecutor has refused to bring the case before the court because, according to lawyers involved in the case, he claims that Kasaien judges there will not treat the defendants fairly.

In the face of impunity for the perpetrators of the violence and indifference on the part of officials, the vast majority of the Kasaiens are adamant in their desire to relocate to Kasai. Refugees take great risks in cramming into the empty spaces of freight trains that pass through Likasi each week. As one refugee told Africa Watch:

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<sup>60</sup> Africa Watch interview with church group, Likasi, March 30, 1993.

**Even if I could return to my home tomorrow, I wouldn't do it. What would I do when I see my furniture in my neighbors home or when I see someone walking down the street with my belongings? The whole thing would start again the next day.<sup>61</sup>**

**All sectors of the society have been affected. Even many Kasaien professionals and business people interviewed by Africa Watch who have escaped the violence until now are abandoning their lives in Likasi and moving on. Local church groups have given up hope of return and are working to help Kasaiens to leave the region.**

### **The Cleansing of Kolwezi**

**The same tensions that gave rise to the sprawling refugee camp at the train station in Likasi exploded in the mining city of Kolwezi, a four-hour-drive north, in mid-March 1993. But while it took one-and-a-half months to convince the Kasaiens of Likasi to leave their homes, the same process reproduced itself in less than two weeks in Kolwezi.**

**The facts surrounding the explosion of violence in Kolwezi are vague. There was a conflict between soldiers and UFERI youth at the same time that Kasaien employees at Gecamines were protesting the climate of insecurity in which they lived and worked. What is most striking about the accounts of residents is how little was necessary to set the violence in motion.**

**The first event occurred sometime around March 18-20, when villagers in a Gecamines workers camp in the zone of Manica attacked a soldier who, according to some reports, was caught stealing corn in a neighboring field. The assault provoked a counter attack by the soldiers' colleagues who descended on the workers camp, beating villagers and pillaging and burning homes.**

**A few days later, a young Katangese man was reportedly killed by soldiers. Katangese youth retaliated, seriously beating one soldier. The soldiers responded by attacking the UFERI headquarters in the cité of Kayeke. According to one witness who fled the neighborhood soon afterwards, the UFERI office was completely destroyed.**

**At that point, the Katangese youth chose to vent their anger on the Kasaien population of the area. On Monday, March 22, about 50 Katangese youth carrying knives and machetes descended on the neighborhood. One witness, a 27-year-old malachite carver from the neighborhood, told Africa Watch that the mob arrived at around 9:00 in the morning. They took all of his equipment and then proceeded to his home where they stole most of his carvings. Gendarmes tried to intervene against the mob which fled past the Avenue Kimpoko and Inga, onto the Avenue des trois Z, where they burned a house and a hotel belonging to Kasaiens.**

**According to the young artist and a friend who was with him at the time, the gendarmes participated in a house-to-house expulsion of Kasaiens the following day. Ostensibly in order to prevent**

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<sup>61</sup> Africa Watch interview in Likasi, March 31, 1993.

**violence, gendarmes accompanied Katangese youth as they told Kasaiens to leave.**

**The same day, March 23, Kasaien workers at Gecamines "Group West," the Kolwezi branch once responsible for 70% of Gecamines' total production, presented a letter complaining about threats and insecurity. The letter lists some of the concerns of the Kasaien community, including: assaults against Kasaien students and teachers at schools, closing of markets to Kasaiens, and pressure by JUFERI at the work-place. Despite the formal ban on political activity at Gecamines, the employees noted, "JUFERI is officially at work in the installations of Group West." When pay was distributed that day, March 23, "JUFERI, unleashed in all of the pay offices, let Kasaiens know that this was their last paycheck and that they had better prepare to go to the [train] station."**

**The letter concluded with a threat to strike "if the normal conditions of security for the employees, their families and their belongings are not re-established in the near future." If this was impossible, the letter concluded, Gecamines "should organize our return to our region of origin under decent conditions, while guaranteeing our contractual rights." The letter was signed by more than two dozen Kasaien Gecamines managers and employees.**

**A meeting was called by the top city official and Gecamines executives, who urged the Kasaiens not to strike. But local and Gecamines officials, by their own account, either would not or could not make any security guarantees. Following the unsuccessful bid by the Kasaien community to win the cooperation of the Gecamines administration, the signatories of the letter were fired from their jobs and some 6,000-7,000 Kasaien employees fled in fear or were chased out of their jobs at Gecamines by JUFERI militants. The displaced Gecamines workers and their dependents account for at least 50,000 Kasaiens according to both Kasaien and Katangese sources.**

**By the end of March, the streets were crowded with Kasaiens selling their belongings and seeking a way to move out. The Kasaien community estimates a total number of 90,000 displaced persons. With the exception of a single soldier accused in the initial attack in Manika, where the case is pending before a military court, according to the urban commissioner of Kolwezi, there is no evidence of any efforts to prosecute individuals responsible for the violence and displacement.**

## **INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE**

**Though the Western governments which formerly supported President Mobutu have not rallied to his side during the recent upheaval, neither have they taken any significant measures to pressure President Mobutu to accept democratic change. Since early 1992, the governments of France, Belgium and the United States--formerly Mobutu's primary supporters--have collaborated to give strong moral support to the transition process headed by the National Conference and then to the Tshisekedi government which the Conference elected in August. All significant economic cooperation and military support came to an end by the first half of 1992, long after such measures had been urged by the U.S. Congress and human rights groups in Zaire and the United States.**

**A State Department paper, dated February 11, outlined possible steps that the U.S. and its allies might take toward Zaire, including: freezing Mobutu's bank accounts in the U.S. and Europe; seizing his personal assets; denying visas to Zairians closely associated with Mobutu; suspending Zaire from the**

**International Monetary Fund; and announcing an arms embargo and a ban on exports from Zaire. Reports indicate that Secretary of State Warren Christopher discussed Zaire in a February 10 meeting in Washington with Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes.<sup>62</sup>**

**Recently, the three governments have been slow to take any further measures, except for restrictions on visas to President Mobutu and his close advisors. This, too, is a measure that human rights groups in Zaire had called for more than a year ago, and was rejected at the time.**

**The U.S. has decided not to appoint a new ambassador to Zaire to replace Ambassador Melissa Wells, who left in March, until the transition process is back on track. However, because Ambassador Wells had played a strong role in convincing Zairians of U.S. support for the democratic process, many interpret the U.S. decision as a step backwards. On April 16, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs George Moose told Belgian reporters that "We have looked for ways to prevent President Mobutu having the ability to use state funds, from the state treasury... The money must be under the control of the legitimate government."<sup>63</sup> One of the measures under consideration was a freeze on Mobutu's funds. No actual measures have yet been taken in this regard, however.**

**Also on April 16, State Department Spokesman Richard Boucher made a strong statement about the situation in Shaba, calling it "government-directed ethnic victimization." He continued:**

**It is apparent that local authorities are still involved in orchestrating intimidation directed at Kasaiens which is intended to force them out of the province. This tragedy is another symptom of the crisis in Zaire brought on by President Mobutu's refusal to allow a democratic transition. We have made clear to President Mobutu and the responsible authorities in Shaba that they must take action to halt the persecution and to bring those responsible to justice.**

**Boucher also announced that since September 1991, the U.S. has provided \$5 million in emergency humanitarian aid to Zaire, all of which was channeled through nongovernmental organizations.**

**One of the measures announced by the governments of France, Belgium and the United States was to involve United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in diplomatic measures aimed at Zaire.<sup>64</sup> The Tshisekedi government has gone even further to request a U.N. peacekeeping force to assist in the transition. However, there has been no indication of any significant U.N. interest in such involvement.**

**The Organization of African Unity (OAU) Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim visited Kinshasa over the weekend of May 16, and met with both Tshisekedi and Mobutu. However, the African states have been**

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<sup>62</sup> Kenneth Noble, "U.S. and Allies Discuss Sanctions to Force Mobutu to Yield Power," *The New York Times*, February 19, 1993.

<sup>63</sup> "U.S. Said Mulling Measures Against Zaire's Mobutu," Reuters, April 16, 1992.

<sup>64</sup> "Zaire Talks Seen When U.N. Head Visits Brussels," Reuters, April 16, 1993.

**instrumental in forcing a number of international bodies to reject delegations sent by the Tshisekedi government. On May 12, the World Health Organization (WHO) accredited the Mobutu delegation over the objections of the European Community members.<sup>65</sup> Since Zaire is scheduled to assume a position on the executive board of WHO, the choice of a representative was left to Mobutu.**

**A similar incident occurred at the meeting of the European Community with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries on May 15, when both the Tshisekedi government and the Mobutu government sent delegations. The ACP countries insisted on seating the Mobutu delegation, despite the European Community's objections.<sup>66</sup>**

## **CONCLUSIONS**

**The violence against Kasaiens in Shaba has already affected the lives of tens of thousands of people, many of whom have lived in the region for generations. It is the result of a cynical and politically expedient campaign to shift popular grievance away from the failed Mobutu regime and onto one group of Zairians who are closely identified with the opposition.**

**Since the moment that Governor Kyungu called on Katangese to take back what was "theirs," it has been open season on Kasaiens. If, at first, it took several months to convince Kasaiens that they would have to "return" to a region where many had never lived, recent events indicate that much less time will be necessary in the future.**

**The hand of the Mobutu government is clear in the genesis of the current situation. Mobutu himself supported Nguz a Karl-i-Bond and Governor Kyungu in their most inflammatory attacks. Under the guise of showing concern for the population after violence exploded in August, Mobutu actually sent Nguz to Shaba as his envoy to examine the situation. In addition, though local military reports indicate significant advance notice of attacks, Mobutu refrained at all times from engaging competent military forces to stop the violence. Moreover, after the violence, there was no effort on the part of the local administration or the military to return Kasaiens to their homes or to help them regain their possessions.**

**Governor Kyungu and his political underlings in the regional administration have played a more openly acknowledged role in fomenting the violence. They have raised an anti-Kasaïen militia and intervened to protect those who have committed violence. Some political allies have been directly implicated in organizing the youth bands who have systematically attacked Kasaïen homes.**

**The Katangese youth bands appear to be beyond the control of the regional government and even the president. But the appearances have not deceived anyone. The youth bands have been organized from among different villages and their actions have been carefully coordinated. When they have been in trouble, as when there were arrests in Likasi, the local administration has come to their aid. In any event, if there had been a will to stop the violence, Mobutu could have used the forces available to him to do so. He**

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<sup>65</sup> "WHO Settles Row Over Zaire Delegations," Reuters, May 12, 1993.

<sup>66</sup> "EC Avoids Row with ACP over Who Represents Zaire," Reuters, May 17, 1993.

still could. Instead, the violence has been condoned, justified or passed over with impunity. As a result, there is no question of the Kasaiens returning to their homes.

For a president who has threatened the country with dissolution if he were to leave, the advantages of the current unrest are clear. It reinforces an argument which was, for many years, the primary public justification of western governments for supporting Mobutu: that Mobutu was necessary to maintain the "stability" of the country.

Africa Watch believes that the problems of regional violence in Zaire are likely to escalate as long as President Mobutu continues to block any democratic transition. His recent actions indicate that he intends to tightly control and manipulate any eventual transition. President Mobutu ordered Tshisekedi to form a new government in December, after Tshisekedi sought to replace the governor of the central bank. Mobutu then tried to sack Tshisekedi himself on February 5. The president's soldiers held the interim parliament hostage for three days in February and when the siege ended on February 26, they attacked the residence of its president, Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo. In March, Mobutu tried to displace Tshisekedi as prime minister by appointing an alternative prime minister, Faustin Birindwa, without the support of the National Conference.

The events in Shaba are just one example of the suspicious re-emergence of regional violence linked to the stand-off in the political process. Soon after Africa Watch completed its mission to the region, news began to emerge about similar acts of violence occurring hundreds of miles away in North Kivu near the borders with Rwanda and Burundi.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> The Belgian paper, *Le Soir* reported that up to 300 people had died in North Kivu. "Flambée de violence au Kivu", *Le Soir*, June 22, 1993. See also, "Intolerance ethnique, conflits fonciers et revendications politiques au Nord Kivu," a report by Groupe d'étude et d'action pour un développement bien défini, a non-governmental organization based in Kivu, April 15, 1993.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Africa Watch calls on the international community—particularly the United States, France, Belgium and the United Nations—to:**

- o denounce the violence and human rights abuses in Shaba, and call for the safe return of Kasaiens to their homes in Shaba;**
- o call for an international investigation into the role of the Mobutu regime, including Governor Kyungu, in encouraging the violence and ensuring that those responsible continue to act with impunity;**
- o step up pressure on President Mobutu to allow the democratic transition to proceed, including freezing Zairian assets and Mobutu's personal assets abroad;**
- o urge the United Nations to engage in immediate diplomatic efforts to convince President Mobutu to permit the transition to democracy and to protect civilians of all ethnic groups.**

*Africa Watch is a nongovernmental organization established in May 1988 to monitor human rights practices in Africa and to promote respect for internationally recognized standards. Its chair is William Carmichael; its vice chair is Alice Brown. The executive director, as of July 1993, is Abdullahi An-Na'im. Its research associates are Janet Fleischman and Karen Sorensen; Bronwen Manby is a Schell Fellow; Abdelsalam Hassan and Alex Vines are consultants; Ben Penglase is an associate.*

*Human Rights Watch monitors and promotes observance of internationally recognized human rights worldwide. It is composed of Africa Watch, Americas Watch, Asia Watch, Helsinki Watch, and Middle East Watch. The Chair of Human Rights Watch is Robert L. Bernstein and the Vice-Chair is Adrian W. DeWind. The Acting Executive Director is Kenneth Roth; Holly J. Burkhalter is Washington Director; Gara LaMarche is Associate Director; and*



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