



19 December 2014 – The conviction of 'Colonel 106' is "a major boost in the [fight against impunity in the DRC](#)

", says UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein. Lieutenant Colonel Bedi Mobuli Engangela was sentenced to life imprisonment for his crimes committed in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo between 2005 and 2007.

"Such a high-profile conviction of a senior officer will, I hope, bring some measure of comfort and catharsis to the victims of the horrific human rights violations committed and ordered by Engangela", Zeid said.

According to UN Special Representative on [Sexual Violence in Conflict](#) Zainab Hawa Bangura, the verdict sends a "very clear message to perpetrators of sexual violence in DRC that they cannot hide behind a badge or evade justice with a uniform."

Who is 'Colonel 106'?

Former FARDC (DRC national armed forces) Lieutenant Colonel Bedi Mobuli Engangela, called ' [Colonel 106](#) ' after the battalion he commanded in [South Kivu](#) , was one of five senior officers of the [FARDC](#) suspected of having committed serious human rights abuses.

In 2007, the UN urged the DRC Government to bring to justice perpetrators of sexual violence, including commanding officers involved in a number of cases. Three years later, an arrest warrant was issued for 'Colonel 106'.

Build on the momentum created

Engangela's conviction comes a month after another high-ranking officer, General Jérôme Kakwavu, was sentenced to 10 years in prison for rape and war crimes committed in Ituri district by himself and his armed FAPC-group between 2003 and 2005.

"With these prosecutions and sentencing the courts have also shown survivors that their voices and cries have been heard, and they will not have to suffer in silence or be denied justice, because their Government supports their right to redress," Ms. Bangura stated.

The UN High Commissioner now calls on the authorities in the DRC to build on the momentum created by these cases to continue to prioritise justice and accountability for gross human rights violations, and to ensure that victims of such crimes receive adequate assistance and compensation.

"Equally, the authorities should ensure that the rights of the accused – to a fair trial and to appeal judicial decisions – are fully respected", Zeid concluded.

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