

## CONGO, DEM.REP.

### MEET A CHILD

I am Thomas, age 13. I was on my way to school with my eight-year-old brother, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), when an armed group of Mai Mai militia forcibly recruited us. I was hit in the back with rifle butts during training. The ordeal was over when the UN troops demobilised child soldiers. It was a very bad experience and I want to forget it.

**TOTAL POPULATION**                      **58,318,000**  
**CHILD POPULATION**                    **27,992,640**

Population Reference Bureau -  
2004

### TOTAL CHILD LABOUR

As per UNICEF about 28%\* of children between 5-14 are involved in child labour

State of World's Children 2005,  
UNICEF

In 2001, UNICEF estimated that 24.2 percent of children ages 5 to 14 years in the Democratic Republic of Congo were working.

The US Dept.of Labour 2003  
Findings on the Worst Forms of  
Child Labour.

### ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION

For the year 2010, 28,415,000 economically active people are estimated in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Of them, 2,549,000 are estimated to be children in the age group 10-14 representing 26.9% of the children in that age group

ILO, Bureau of Statistics,  
Economically Active Population

### GENDER RATIO

1020 females for 1000 males

CIA, factbook-2005 (Fig is an  
estimate for 2005)

### CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL

Data not available

UNESCO's EFA Global Monitoring  
Report 2005

### PROGRESS ON PRIMARY EDUCATION MDG

Data Not Available

UNESCO's EFA Global Monitoring  
Report 2005

### CHILD SLAVERY

Armed groups continued to abduct and forcibly recruit Congolese men, women, and children to serve as laborers, porters, domestics, combatants, and sex slaves.

US Dept. of State, Trafficking in  
Persons Report 2005

Women and girls were raped or subjected to other forms of sexual violence and abducted into sexual servitude.

CSUCS, Global Report on Child Soldiers, 2004

Armed groups continued to abduct and forcibly recruit children to serve as forced laborers, porters, combatants, "war wives," and sex slaves .

US Dept. of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2004, February 2005

### **CHILD TRAFFICKING**

Democratic Republic of the Congo is a source country for men, women and children internally trafficked for forced labor and sexual exploitation.

US Dept. of State, Trafficking in Persons Report 2005

The vast majority of the trafficking occurs in northeastern and eastern Congo, regions that are mostly outside effective transitional government control.

### **CHILD PROSTITUTION**

There were confirmed reports of children in prostitution in brothels across the country. During the year, a number of personnel from the UN peacekeeping mission to the Congo (MONUC), were accused of sexually exploiting women and girls.

US Dept. of State, Trafficking in Persons Report 2005

### **CHILDREN USED IN CRIME**

There were numerous reports of collusion between police and street children, including street children who paid police officers for the right to sleep in abandoned buildings, and children who paid police a percentage of goods they stole in large markets

US Dept. of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2004, February 2005

### **CHILD SOLDIERS**

All parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) recruited, abducted and used child soldiers, often on the front line. As many as 30,000 child soldiers were estimated by international and government agencies to need demobilizing in 2003.

CSUCS, Global Report on Child Soldiers, 2004

In eastern DRC in 2003, armed political groups continued to recruit child soldiers, who constituted more than 40 per cent of their forces in some instances.

Although demobilization of child soldiers officially began in 2000, none of the forces involved were genuinely committed to the process and only a small proportion of child soldiers were demobilized.

The government estimated that 30,000 children were associated with armed groups within the country.

US Dept. of State, Trafficking in Persons Report 2005

Credible estimates of the total number of children associated with armed groups varied widely from 15,000 to 30,000, many of whom were very young, including a 7-year-old boy who served with PUSIC(Party for the Safeguarding of the Congo )

#### **CHILDREN IN UNORGANISED SECTOR**

Children work in the informal sector and in subsistence agriculture, which constitute the largest sectors of the economy.

Some children hunt or fish to support their families instead of attending school.

Children work in mining,stone crushing, garbage collecting and as porters and errand boys.

\*: The figure is for a section of the population as per the UNICEF report

US Dept. of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices- 2004, February 2005

The US Dept.of Labor's 2003 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.