

**DR Congo****Presidency Declaration following an exchange of views  
at the informal EU Development Ministers meeting**

Funchal 21/22. September 2007

- Under **no circumstances** further escalation of violence especially towards women and children **acceptable**.
- Call on parties and groups concerned to **stop immediately** this violence **against women and girls**.
- Remind **Congolese government** of its obligation to **prevent these crimes** and **prosecute the perpetrators without delay**.
- **Government** must **investigate attacks** and **bring perpetrators to court now**. It must **send a clear signal** that these crimes will not go unpunished - both within the Congolese army and within the militias.
- Rape on this scale is a **crime against humanity** and also a **war crime**.
- EU development Ministers urge the chief prosecutor of the **International Criminal Court** to include the most recent attacks and sexual violence in its ongoing investigations.
- EU Development Ministers share the view that the **prevention** and **prosecution** of these crimes should be top priority of the international community
- **Rapid support for the government** in implementing a **zero tolerance policy** (like in Liberia):
  - *Make up of protection units for women and children at police stations,*
  - *improvements in post-traumatic care, including medical care for rape victims,*
  - *zero tolerance towards rape,*
  - *increased prosecutions for rape,*
  - *appropriate training for lawyers,*
  - *establishment of special courts to deal with cases.*
- The **components of protecting civil society and, above all, women and children**, must also be respected and implemented under the **MONUC mandate**.