

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT AN END TO IMPUNITY IN
THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**
2011 USCMA Annual Meeting
Miami, FL

Be it resolved that the United States Catholic Mission Association (USCMA) joins the Africa Faith and Justice Network (AFJN) in its commitment to put an end to impunity in the Democratic Republic of Congo and to promote justice in DRC and the Great Lakes Region in general by supporting the establishment of a specialized court as recommended by the UN mapping exercise

Rationale:

The widespread impunity in the DRC and the lack of accountability for crimes detailed in the UN Mapping Exercise Report is appalling. Seeking peace, stability and justice in DRC is not only in the best interest of every nation in the region, but also in line with American democratic values.

Whereas the United Nations published on October 1, 2010 the “*Mapping Exercise documenting the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed within the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo between March 1993 and June 2003*”

Whereas the Congolese Ministry of Justice introduced in the Senate a bill to establish a specialized court for DRC to try these crimes; a court that will be composed of Congolese and international judges to ensure independence and efficiency.

Whereas Congolese civil society had advocated for this specialized court after these crimes were committed, and long before the UN report was published.

Whereas foreign armies, mainly the Rwandan, Burundian and Ugandan, are reported to have committed some of these crimes during their invasion of the DRC in 1996.

Whereas evidence shows that in the Congo, particularly in the Kivus, the conflict continues and crimes such as rape by foreign fighters, the Congolese army, police, and civilians continues to be used as a weapon of war.

Therefore, the United States Catholic Mission Association joins the Africa Faith and Justice Network in calling on the U.S. Congress and the Obama administration to promote justice in DRC and the Great Lakes Region in general by supporting the establishment of a specialized court as recommended by the UN mapping exercise

Suggested Action:

Schedule a visit, call, fax, or write a letter to your representative and ask that he or she makes justice for the victims of atrocities in the Congo a top priority of his or her foreign policy agenda.

Here is a sample message:

"My name is ____ from _____. I am concerned about impunity in the Democratic Republic of Congo. As your constituent, I want to alert you to the crimes listed in the October 1st, 2010 UN Mapping Report on the Democratic Republic of Congo. I ask that you make a public statement, push for a hearing, and/or initiate a "dear colleague" letter in support of the UN Mapping Report. I also urge you to personally ask Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to ensure justice is served for all the victims of crimes committed in the DRC, both those mentioned in the UN Mapping Report as well as those omitted from the document. Thank you for your consideration.