

Congo, Democratic Republic of the



Introduction Congo, Democratic Republic of the

Background: Established as a Belgian colony in 1908, the Republic of the Congo gained its independence in 1960, but its early years were marred by political and social instability. Col. Joseph MOBUTU seized power and declared himself president in a November 1965 coup. He subsequently changed his name - to MOBUTU Sese Seko - as well as that of the country - to Zaire. MOBUTU retained his position for 32 years through several subsequent sham elections, as well as through the use of brutal force. Ethnic strife and civil war, touched off by a massive inflow of refugees in 1994 from fighting in Rwanda and Burundi, led in May 1997 to the toppling of the MOBUTU regime by a rebellion led by Laurent KABILA. He renamed the country the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), but in August 1998 his regime was itself challenged by an insurrection backed by Rwanda and Uganda. Troops from Angola, Chad, Namibia, Sudan, and Zimbabwe intervened to support the Kinshasa regime. A cease-fire was signed in July 1999 by the DRC, Congolese armed rebel groups, Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe but sporadic fighting continued. Laurent KABILA was assassinated in January 2001 and his son, Joseph KABILA, was named head of state. In October 2002, the new president was successful in negotiating the withdrawal of Rwandan forces occupying eastern Congo; two months

later, the Pretoria Accord was signed by all remaining warring parties to end the fighting and establish a government of national unity. A transitional government was set up in July 2003; with Joseph KABILA as president and joined by four vice presidents representing the former government, former rebel groups, and the political opposition. The transitional government held a successful constitutional referendum in December 2005 and elections for the presidency, National Assembly, and provincial legislatures in 2006. KABILA was inaugurated president in December 2006.

Geography	Congo, Democratic Republic of the
Location:	Central Africa, northeast of Angola
Geographic coordinates:	0 00 N, 25 00 E
Map references:	Africa
Area:	<i>total:</i> 2,345,410 sq km <i>land:</i> 2,267,600 sq km <i>water:</i> 77,810 sq km
Area - comparative:	slightly less than one-fourth the size of the US
Land boundaries:	<i>total:</i> 10,730 km <i>border countries:</i> Angola 2,511 km (of which 225 km is the boundary of Angola's discontinuous Cabinda Province), Burundi 233 km, Central African Republic 1,577 km, Republic of the Congo 2,410 km, Rwanda 217 km, Sudan 628 km, Tanzania 459 km, Uganda 765 km, Zambia 1,930 km
Coastline:	37 km
Maritime claims:	<i>territorial sea:</i> 12 nm <i>exclusive economic zone:</i> boundaries with neighbors
Climate:	tropical; hot and humid in equatorial river basin; cooler and drier in southern highlands; cooler and wetter in eastern highlands; north of Equator - wet season (April to October), dry season (December to February); south of Equator - wet season (November to March), dry season (April to October)
Terrain:	vast central basin is a low-lying plateau; mountains in east
Elevation extremes:	<i>lowest point:</i> Atlantic Ocean 0 m <i>highest point:</i> Pic Marguerite on Mont Ngaliema (Mount Stanley) 5,110 m

Natural resources:	cobalt, copper, niobium, tantalum, petroleum, industrial and gem diamonds, gold, silver, zinc, manganese, tin, uranium, coal, hydropower, timber
Land use:	<i>arable land:</i> 2.86% <i>permanent crops:</i> 0.47% <i>other:</i> 96.67% (2005)
Irrigated land:	110 sq km (2003)
Natural hazards:	periodic droughts in south; Congo River floods (seasonal); in the east, in the Great Rift Valley, there are active volcanoes
Environment - current issues:	poaching threatens wildlife populations; water pollution; deforestation; refugees responsible for significant deforestation, soil erosion, and wildlife poaching; mining of minerals (coltan - a mineral used in creating capacitors, diamonds, and gold) causing environmental damage
Environment - international agreements:	<i>party to:</i> Biodiversity, Climate Change, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands <i>signed, but not ratified:</i> Environmental Modification
Geography - note:	straddles equator; has very narrow strip of land that controls the lower Congo River and is only outlet to South Atlantic Ocean; dense tropical rain forest in central river basin and eastern highlands

People	Congo, Democratic Republic of the
Population:	62,660,551 <i>note:</i> estimates for this country explicitly take into account the effects of excess mortality due to AIDS; this can result in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality and death rates, lower population and growth rates, and changes in the distribution of population by age and sex than would otherwise be expected (July 2006 est.)
Age structure:	<i>0-14 years:</i> 47.4% (male 14,906,488/female 14,798,210) <i>15-64 years:</i> 50.1% (male 15,597,353/female 15,793,350) <i>65 years and over:</i> 2.5% (male 632,143/female 933,007) (2006 est.)
Median age:	<i>total:</i> 16.2 years <i>male:</i> 16 years <i>female:</i> 16.4 years (2006 est.)
Population growth rate:	3.07% (2006 est.)

Birth rate: 43.69 births/1,000 population (2006 est.)

Death rate: 13.27 deaths/1,000 population (2006 est.)

Net migration rate: 0.23 migrant(s)/1,000 population
note: fighting between the Congolese Government and Uganda- and Rwanda-backed Congolese rebels spawned a regional war in DRC in August 1998, which left 2.33 million Congolese internally displaced and caused 412,000 Congolese refugees to flee to surrounding countries (2006 est.)

Sex ratio: *at birth:* 1.03 male(s)/female
under 15 years: 1.01 male(s)/female
15-64 years: 0.99 male(s)/female
65 years and over: 0.68 male(s)/female
total population: 0.99 male(s)/female (2006 est.)

Infant mortality rate: *total:* 88.62 deaths/1,000 live births
male: 96.9 deaths/1,000 live births
female: 80.1 deaths/1,000 live births (2006 est.)

Life expectancy at birth: *total population:* 51.46 years
male: 50.01 years
female: 52.94 years (2006 est.)

Total fertility rate: 6.45 children born/woman (2006 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate: 4.2% (2003 est.)

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS: 1.1 million (2003 est.)

HIV/AIDS - deaths: 100,000 (2003 est.)

Major infectious diseases: *degree of risk:* very high
food or waterborne diseases: bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever
vectorborne diseases: malaria, plague, and African trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness) are high risks in some locations
water contact disease: schistosomiasis (2005)

Nationality: *noun:* Congolese (singular and plural)
adjective: Congolese or Congo

Ethnic groups: over 200 African ethnic groups of which the majority are Bantu; the four largest tribes - Mongo, Luba, Kongo (all

Bantu), and the Mangbetu-Azande (Hamitic) make up about 45% of the population

Religions: Roman Catholic 50%, Protestant 20%, Kimbanguist 10%, Muslim 10%, other syncretic sects and indigenous beliefs 10%

Languages: French (official), Lingala (a lingua franca trade language), Kingwana (a dialect of Kiswahili or Swahili), Kikongo, Tshiluba

Literacy: *definition:* age 15 and over can read and write French, Lingala, Kingwana, or Tshiluba
total population: 65.5%
male: 76.2%
female: 55.1% (2003 est.)

Government	Congo, Democratic Republic of the
Country name:	<i>conventional long form:</i> Democratic Republic of the Congo <i>conventional short form:</i> none <i>local long form:</i> Republique Democratique du Congo <i>local short form:</i> none <i>former:</i> Congo Free State, Belgian Congo, Congo/Leopoldville, Congo/Kinshasa, Zaire <i>abbreviation:</i> DRC
Government type:	transitional government
Capital:	<i>name:</i> Kinshasa <i>geographic coordinates:</i> 4 18 S, 15 18 E <i>time difference:</i> UTC+1 (six hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)
Administrative divisions:	10 provinces (provinces, singular - province) and 1 city* (ville); Bandundu, Bas-Congo, Equateur, Kasai-Occidental, Kasai-Oriental, Katanga, Kinshasa*, Maniema, Nord-Kivu, Orientale, Sud-Kivu <i>note:</i> According to the Constitution adopted in December 2005, the current administrative divisions will be subdivided into 26 new provinces
Independence:	30 June 1960 (from Belgium)
National holiday:	Independence Day, 30 June (1960)
Constitution:	18 February 2006
Legal system:	a new constitution was adopted by referendum 18 December 2005; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction, with reservations

- Suffrage:** 18 years of age; universal and compulsory
- Executive branch:** *chief of state:* President Joseph KABILA (since 26 January 2001); note - following the assassination of his father, Laurent Desire KABILA, on 16 January 2001, Joseph KABILA succeeded to the presidency, his presidency was reconfirmed by the October 2006 elections; the president is both the chief of state and head of government
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cabinet: National Executive Council appointed by the president
elections: under the new constitution the president is elected by popular vote to a five-year term (eligible for a second term); elections last held 30 July 2006 with a second round held on 29 October 2006 (next to be held in 2011)
election results: results of 29 October 2006 elections (second round); Joseph KABILA 58%, Jean-Pierre BEMBA Gombo 42%
note: Joseph KABILA succeeded his father, Laurent Desire KABILA, following the latter's assassination in January 2001; negotiations with rebel leaders led to the establishment of a transitional government in July 2003 with free elections held on 30 July 2006 and 29 October 2006 where the popular vote confirmed Joseph KABILA as president
- Legislative branch:** bicameral legislature consists of a National Assembly (500 seats; 60 members elected by majority vote in single-member constituencies 440 members elected by open list proportional-representation in multi-member constituencies; members serve 5-year terms) and a Senate (108 seats; members elected by provincial assemblies to serve 5-year terms)
elections: National Assembly - last held 30 July 2006 (next to be held in 2011)
election results: National Assembly - percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - PPRD 111, MLC 64, PALU 34, MSR 27, FR 26, RCD 15, Independents 63, others 160 (includes 63 political parties that won fewer than 10 seats)
- Judicial branch:** Supreme Court or Cour Supreme
- Political parties and** Congolese Rally for Democracy or RCD [Azaria RUBERWA]; Forces for Renovation for Union and

leaders: Solidarity or FONUS [Joseph OLENGHANKOY]; Forces of Renewal or FR [Mbusa NYAMWISI]; Movement for the Liberation of the Congo or MLC [Jean-Pierre BEMBA]; National Congolese Lumumbist Movement or MNC [Francois LUMUMBA]; People's Party for Reconstruction and Democracy or PPRD [Joseph Kabila]; Social Movement for Renewal or MSR; Unified Lumumbast Party or PALU [Antoine GIZENGA]; Union for Democracy and Social Progress or UDPS [Etienne TSHISEKEDI wa Mulumba]

Political pressure groups and leaders: NA

International organization participation: ACCT, ACP, AfDB, AU, CEPGL, COMESA, FAO, G-24, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICCt, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, IHO (suspended), ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITU, ITUC, MIGA, NAM, OIF, OPCW, PCA, SADC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WCL, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US: *chief of mission:* Ambassador Faïda MITIFU
chancery: 1800 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20009; note - Consular Office at 1726 M Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20036
telephone: [1] (202) 234-7690, 7691
FAX: [1] (202) 234-2609

Diplomatic representation from the US: *chief of mission:* Ambassador Roger MEECE
embassy: 310 Avenue des Aviateurs, Kinshasa
mailing address: Unit 31550, APO AE 09828
telephone: [243] (88) 43608
FAX: [243] (88) 43467

Flag description: sky blue field divided diagonally from the lower hoist corner to upper fly corner by a red stripe bordered by two narrow yellow stripes; a yellow, five-pointed star appears in the upper hoist corner

Economy	Congo, Democratic Republic of the
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Economy - overview: The economy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo - a nation endowed with vast potential wealth - has declined drastically since the mid-1980s. The war, which began in August 1998, dramatically reduced national output and government revenue, increased external debt, and resulted in the deaths of perhaps 3.5 million people from violence, famine, and disease. Foreign businesses curtailed operations due to uncertainty about the outcome of the

conflict, lack of infrastructure, and the difficult operating environment. Conditions improved in late 2002 with the withdrawal of a large portion of the invading foreign troops. The transitional government has reopened relations with international financial institutions and international donors, and President KABILA has begun implementing reforms. Much economic activity lies outside the GDP data. Economic stability improved in 2003-06, although an uncertain legal framework, corruption, and a lack of openness in government policy continues to hamper growth. In 2005-06, renewed activity in the mining sector, the source of most exports, boosted Kinshasa's fiscal position and GDP growth. Business and economic prospects are expected to improve once a new government is installed after elections.

GDP (purchasing power parity):	\$44.6 billion (2006 est.)
GDP (official exchange rate):	\$8.061 billion (2006 est.)
GDP - real growth rate:	7.5% (2006 est.)
GDP - per capita (PPP):	\$700 (2006 est.)
GDP - composition by sector:	<i>agriculture: 55%</i> <i>industry: 11%</i> <i>services: 34% (2000 est.)</i>
Labor force:	14.51 million (1993 est.)
Labor force - by occupation:	<i>agriculture: NA%</i> <i>industry: NA%</i> <i>services: NA%</i>
Unemployment rate:	NA%
Population below poverty line:	NA%
Household income or consumption by percentage share:	<i>lowest 10%: NA%</i> <i>highest 10%: NA%</i>
Inflation rate (consumer prices):	9% (2004 est.)

Budget: *revenues:* \$700 million
expenditures: \$750 million; including capital expenditures of \$24 million (2004 est.)

Agriculture - products: coffee, sugar, palm oil, rubber, tea, quinine, cassava (tapioca), palm oil, bananas, root crops, corn, fruits; wood products

Industries: mining (diamonds, copper, zinc), mineral processing, consumer products (including textiles, footwear, cigarettes, processed foods and beverages), cement, commercial ship repair

Industrial production growth rate: NA%

Electricity - production: 353 million kWh (2004)

Electricity - production by source: *fossil fuel:* 1.8%
hydro: 98.2%
nuclear: 0%
other: 0% (2001)

Electricity - consumption: 658.3 million kWh (2004)

Electricity - exports: 0 kWh (2004)

Electricity - imports: 330 million kWh (2004)

Oil - production: 21,090 bbl/day (2004)

Oil - consumption: 8,200 bbl/day (2004 est.)

Oil - exports: NA bbl/day (2001)

Oil - imports: NA bbl/day (2001)

Oil - proved reserves: 1.538 billion bbl (1 January 2002)

Natural gas - production: 0 cu m (2004 est.)

Natural gas - consumption: 0 cu m (2004 est.)

Natural gas - proved reserves: 991.1 million cu m (1 January 2005 est.)

Exports: \$1.108 billion f.o.b. (2004 est.)

Exports - commodities: diamonds, copper, crude oil, coffee, cobalt

Exports - partners: Belgium 38.1%, US 17.8%, China 11.6%, France 8%, Finland 7.7%, Chile 4.3% (2005)

Imports: \$1.319 billion f.o.b. (2004 est.)

Imports - commodities: foodstuffs, mining and other machinery, transport equipment, fuels

Imports - partners: South Africa 18%, Belgium 15.6%, France 8.8%, Zambia 6.7%, Kenya 6.2%, Germany 4.5%, US 4.4%, Cote d'Ivoire 4.2%, Netherlands 4% (2005)

Debt - external: \$10.6 billion (2003 est.)

Economic aid - recipient: \$2.2 billion (FY03/04)

Currency (code): Congolese franc (CDF)

Currency code: CDF

Exchange rates: Congolese francs per US dollar - 437.86 (2005), 401.04 (2004), 405.34 (2003), 346.49 (2002)

Fiscal year: calendar year

Communications Congo, Democratic Republic of the

Telephones - main lines in use: 10,600 (2005)

Telephones - mobile cellular: 2.746 million (2005)

Telephone system: *general assessment:* poor
domestic: barely adequate wire and microwave radio relay service in and between urban areas; domestic satellite system with 14 earth stations
international: country code - 243; satellite earth station - 1 Intelsat (Atlantic Ocean)

Radio broadcast stations: AM 3, FM 11, shortwave 2 (2001)

Radios: 18.03 million (1997)

Television broadcast: 4 (2001)

stations:

Televisions: 6.478 million (1997)

**Internet
country
code:** .cd

**Internet
hosts:** 1,778 (2006)

**Internet
Service
Providers
(ISPs):** 1 (2001)

**Internet
users:** 140,600 (2005)

Transportation Congo, Democratic Republic of the

Airports: 234 (2006)

**Airports -
with paved
runways:** *total: 25
over 3,047 m: 4
2,438 to 3,047 m: 2
1,524 to 2,437 m: 16
914 to 1,523 m: 2
under 914 m: 1 (2006)*

**Airports -
with unpaved
runways:** *total: 209
1,524 to 2,437 m: 18
914 to 1,523 m: 94
under 914 m: 97 (2006)*

Pipelines: gas 54 km; oil 78 km (2006)

Railways: *total: 5,138 km
narrow gauge: 3,987 km 1.067-m gauge (858 km
electrified); 125 km 1.000-m gauge; 1,026 km 0.600-m
gauge (2005)*

Roadways: *total: 153,497 km
paved: 2,794 km
unpaved: 150,703 km (2004)*

Waterways: 15,000 km (2005)

**Merchant
marine:** *total: 1 ship (1000 GRT or over) 1,004 GRT/1,640 DWT
by type: petroleum tanker 1
foreign-owned: 1 (Congo, Republic of the 1) (2006)*

**Ports and
terminals:** Banana, Boma, Bukavu, Bumba, Goma, Kalemie, Kindu,
Kinshasa, Kisangani, Matadi, Mbandaka

Military	Congo, Democratic Republic of the
Military branches:	Army, Navy, Air Force
Military service age and obligation:	18-45 years of age for military service
Manpower available for military service:	<i>males age 18-49</i> : 11,365,610 (2005 est.)
Manpower fit for military service:	<i>males age 18-49</i> : 6,464,223 (2005 est.)
Military expenditures - dollar figure:	\$103.7 million (2005 est.)
Military expenditures - percent of GDP:	1.5% (2005 est.)

Transnational Issues	Congo, Democratic Republic of the
Disputes - international:	heads of the Great Lakes states and UN pledge to end conflict but unchecked tribal, rebel, and militia fighting continues unabated in the northeastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, drawing in the neighboring states of Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda; the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) has maintained over 14,000 peacekeepers in the region since 1999; thousands of Ituri refugees from the Congo continue to flee the fighting primarily into Uganda; 90,000 Angolan refugees were repatriated by 2004 with the remainder in the DRC expected to return in 2005; in 2005, DRC and Rwanda established a border verification mechanism to address accusations of Rwandan military supporting Congolese rebels and the DRC providing rebel Rwandan "Interhamwe" forces the means and bases to attack Rwandan forces; the location of the boundary in the broad Congo River with the Republic of the Congo is indefinite except in the Pool Malebo/Stanley Pool area
Refugees and internally displaced	<i>refugees (country of origin)</i> : 106,772 (Angola), 42,360 (Rwanda), 19,032 (Burundi), 18,954 (Uganda), 11,723 (Sudan), 5,243 (Republic of Congo) <i>IDPs</i> : 1.1 million (fighting between government forces and

persons: rebels since mid-1990s; most IDPs are in eastern provinces)
(2006)

Illicit drugs: illicit producer of cannabis, mostly for domestic consumption; while rampant corruption and inadequate supervision leaves the banking system vulnerable to money laundering, the lack of a well-developed financial system limits the country's utility as a money-laundering center