



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

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Information on Raia Mutomboki

In December 2013 a paper released by the *Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset* notes:

“Raia Mutomboki, meaning citizens in anger (Think Africa Press 2013), was established in 2005 in the Shabunda, South Kivu region with the aim of defending the local communal groups in response to a massacre of 12 civilians perpetrated by the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) (Enough Project 2013). Approximately half of the group’s activities to date have taken place in South Kivu, with over a quarter occurring in North Kivu and 11% in Maniema. During the period 2007-2011, Raia Mutomboki largely fell into decline but re-emerged during the summer of 2011 as the M23 campaign gained momentum” (Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset (December 2013) *Country Report: DR Congo*, p.5).

A document issued in October 2013 by *IRIN News* notes:

“...M23 collaborator, Raia Mutomboki, ("outraged citizens") is the largest armed body in South Kivu, according to Usalama Project.

Raia Mutomboki, established in 2005 in South Kivu's Shabunda Territory by Congolese army defector Pastor Jean Musumbu in response to FDLR massacres, comprises various groups headed by local leaders and FARDC deserters. It evolved from a parochial militia into a violent franchise deployed across large parts of North and South Kivu amid flaws in the various peace deals in eastern DRC... "Raia Mutomboki is first and foremost a reaction to the presence of former Interahamwe group FDLR which has wreaked havoc across wide parts of eastern Congo. [They] function on the basis of localized self-defence militias that have tried to counter the FDLR threat as violently as possible, including [through] serious human rights violations such as arbitrary killings, attacks against unarmed dependants, or executions... Raia Mutomboki has rapidly developed in the Kivus, according to the GoE report. In March 2013, a Raia Mutomboki commander in Shabunda, Mutuza Kasapa, told the GoE that the militia would not cease hostilities as long as there are Rwandophones in the Kivus. The GoE report documented M23 support for some Raia Mutomboki groups in North Kivu's southern Masisi Territory” (IRIN News (31 October 2013) *Briefing: Armed groups in eastern DRC*).

A document issued in December 2013 by *Amnesty International* states:

“...the Raia Mutomboki (“outraged citizens”) is a series of different armed groups which expanded as they intended to protect their community from FDLR attacks, claiming the Congolese army failed to do so” (Amnesty International (16 December 2013) *"Better to die while speaking the truth": Attacks against human rights defenders in North Kivu, DRC*, p.10).

Citing another source, a report released in April 2013 by the *Country of Origin Research and Information*

“...the Raisi Mutomboki (Outraged Citizens) is largely a Rwandan Hutu group, formed in response to insecurity and abuses by the FDLR...” (Country of Origin Research and Information (April 2013) *CORI Country Report Democratic Republic of Congo; Security Issues*, p.79).

Human Rights Watch in May 2013 notes:

“Many of the worst ethnically motivated attacks were carried out by the Raia Mutomboki (“Outraged People” in Swahili), a loosely organized network of former militia fighters, demobilized soldiers and youth who armed themselves largely with machetes and spears supposedly to protect local populations from the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), a largely Rwandan Hutu armed group, some of whose members participated in the genocide in Rwanda. The Raia Mutomboki often avoided direct clashes with the FDLR, and instead focused their attacks first on the FDLR’s dependents and Rwandan Hutu refugee women and children, and later on the Congolese Hutu population. This group has killed at least 314 civilians since April 2012 in Kalehe, Walikale, and Masisi territories, according to Human Rights Watch research. Nearly all of the victims were Hutu” (Human Rights Watch (8 May 2013) *Letter to DR Congo President Joseph Kabila on Ending Impunity for Grave Human Rights Abuses*).

In January 2013 the *Rift Valley Institute* notes:

“The Raia Mutomboki today is not one unitary movement but a series of different armed groups, bound only by a name and a broad ideology of self-defence” (Rift Valley Institute (Jan 2013) *Raia Mutomboki: The flawed peace process in the DRC and the birth of an armed franchise*, p.39).

A report released in January 2014 by the *Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre* notes:

“Between 25 and 30 per cent of Raia Mutomboki fighters are estimated to be children” (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (14 January 2014) *Multiple crises hamper prospects for durable solutions*, p.9).

In May 2014 the *Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre* notes that:

“...numerous other armed groups remain active in eastern DRC, including Mai-Mai militias, Raia Mutomboki, the Rwandan Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and the Ugandan Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)” (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (14 May 2014) *Global Overview 2014: People internally displaced by conflict and violence - Democratic Republic of the Congo*).

A report issued in February 2014 by the *United States Department of State* reviewing events of the preceding year notes:

“There were credible reports the following armed groups perpetrated serious human rights abuses in the country during the year: APCLS; ADF/NALU; Bakata Katanga; Coalition of Ituri Armed Groups; FDLR; Forces Nationales de Liberation; Forces de la Defense Congolaise; Forces de Resistance Patriotique d’Ituri; LRA; M23; Nyatura; Patriotes Resistants Congolaise; Raia Mutomboki; and the following Mai-Mai groups: Cheka, Gedeon, Kifuafua, Morgan/Simba/Lumumba/Manu/Luc, Pareco, Shetani, and Yakutumba” (United States Department of State (27 February 2014) *Country Reports*

on *Human Rights Practices for 2013*, Section 1g Use of Excessive Force and Other Abuses in Internal Conflicts).

In November 2013 *Human Rights Watch* points out that:

“The Raia Mutomboki have killed hundreds of civilians since mid-2012...” (Human Rights Watch (25 November 2013) *Unbroken Violence in Congo*).

References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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