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CONGO'S POLITICAL CRISIS: WHAT IS THE WAY FORWARD?

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. O'HANLON: Good morning everyone. Welcome to Brookings. I'm Michael O'Hanlon with the Foreign Policy program. Great to see you all out here on a day that's evocative of a nice, warm afternoon in Kinshasa.

And we are going to talk about the future of the Democratic Republic of Congo. A wonderful country that Tony Gambino and I had the great privilege of serving in as Peace Corps volunteers. I will introduce each of the panelists in just a moment. Tony also has gone back many times. We have Tom Perriello who is President's Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region of Africa, and the Ambassador.

But I will speak about each one of these fine gentlemen in just a moment with a little more detail as we prepare to get into our discussion. Let me frame things for you a little bit today.

This is sort of a usual Brookings event where the policy questions before us will be, in fact, the future of the DRC, and especially the future of its politics in a year when, just like our own political system, the DRC is supposed to have an election, and yet that is in considerable doubt at the moment, as most of you probably know by virtue of being here and interested in the first place.

But for those who wandered by, or for those who are channel surfing and getting tired of watching beach volleyball, or something, at the Olympics, let me just say that right now we have the -- well, at least the formal expectation of a November 2016 Election in DRC, just as we do in the United States. But that is in considerable doubt. The Incumbent President, Joseph Kabila, who has been in office since 2001, and therefore has served now virtually two entire elected terms plus one previous term that he essentially inherited when his father was assassinated and he took office back at the very

beginning of the century.

He is still a young man. He's only 45 years old, and there is speculation as to whether President Kabila is intentionally delaying these elections in order to figure out a way to stay in office longer, perhaps even rethink the constitution of DRC to allow for more than two terms.

Like most countries, Congo has a constitution that only allows for two formal presidential terms, because Kabila started essentially inheriting his father's term in office, he has done the equivalent of three terms already, but there is the question as to whether he, like other presidents in the Central African region that we discussed at times here Brookings with Tony Gambino and the Honorable Tom Perriello before, he may also try to stay longer.

This is an issue all over the world, we know. We know that President Putin found a way to come back into the office. We know that President Museveni in Uganda just celebrated, if that's the right word, his 30<sup>th</sup> year in office. We know that the President Paul Kagame, who helped end the Rwanda genocide in 1994 is still in office and has aspirations, perhaps, to stay longer than Vladimir Putin may be able to keep himself in the Kremlin.

This is a problem, because for American foreign policy we don't know what to do about it. Because some of these leaders, and we'll get to whether President Kabila belongs in category A or B or C in a moment; some of these leaders have done good things for their country. One could know that Kabila himself has presided over a period in which DRC has become somewhat more peaceful, and yet it has huge enduring challenges.

And so the question is, is Kabila really the right guy to keep going

forward? Does he really have aspirations to keep going forward? Exactly where are we in the politics of this country?

So that's a brief primer. I'm going to get out of the way here in just a second and let the panelists speak to you. One more one more thing though about the rules of the road here this morning, the Congolese Ambassador, Ambassador Balumuene, who is a very distinguished, long-standing servant of this country and has been an Ambassador to a number of countries in South Asia, most recently India, also Southeast Asia, South Africa, various jobs at the U.N. Long-standing under several Congolese presidents, so I guess I should say, I think three Congolese presidents, he will speak in French. His English is excellent.

We have been speaking in English before, but given the sensitivity of these topics he has asked for the opportunity to make sure he gets every single comma, and every single participle exactly correct, because we are talking about sensitive matters that obviously affect his country and its relationship with the rest of the world, including United States. So, seated to his right is an interpreter who will help couch his remarks in English after he has expressed them formally in French.

We are going to do opening comments. They'll be in the vicinity of 10 or 12 minutes each, perhaps, but whatever people choose. And then we will have a little discussion amongst ourselves before we go to you.

So, with that as background, let me say just a couple words about each of these individuals who, again, you can read about in the materials that are provided out front.

My good friend, Anthony Gambino has been a lifelong advocate for activists regarding and servant of the people of the DRC, as well as the people of the

United States. He has done a number of jobs in U.S. government that have concerned former Zaire, now Democratic Republic of Congo. As I said, he and I were Peace Corps volunteers together, some 30-plus years ago. He never lost the bug for Congo.

He worked with AID many years, he was the country director for AID in the DRC about 15, 16, 18 years ago, somewhere in that range, around the turn of the century, about when Kabila was approached to come into office, and has stayed involved in Congo ever since. He was an election observer in the 2006 elections, which is now the presidential election once removed, and was the first one that President Kabila won through the ballot box. The first he came in office officially as his own man, elected president by official procedures.

The Honorable Tom Perriello is a former congressman from the state of Virginia. He's been now serving for President Obama and Secretary Kerry as the envoy to the Great Lakes Region of Africa for a couple of years. We had him here last fall when he spoke about, also, Burundi and Rwanda, at particularly delicate moments. Also countries, as I mentioned earlier, with Kagame in Rwanda, but also in the case of Burundi that have had presidents who have sought to stay on longer than we might have preferred with a two-term construct, in our own thinking about democracy.

Well that's not -- I'm not trying to say what's Tom is going to say this is -- his mandate is to think about these countries and the entirety of their problems, including their violence, the fact that all these countries have been in a considerable degree of instability, and obviously the United States wants to do what it can to help stabilize this crucial part of Africa.

I should say that the DRC -- before I mention the ambassador up here in a moment -- DRC is, as I think most of you know, one of the three or four pivotal states of

Africa by any measure. Its population is now about 80 million plus or minus; that puts it third after Nigeria and Ethiopia on the Continent. Its land mass is second only after Algeria, now that Sudan has split in two. And of course Algeria is largely desert, which means the DRC is far and away, the largest country in terms of available arable land with a lot of resources on it in all of Africa.

And of course we all used to hear 15, 20 years ago about how this was the place where there had been sort of a great war, or a great interstate war in Africa because the DRC borders, I think, nine different countries, and it's right there in the middle of the Continent. So, it's maybe only a slight exaggeration to say that as the DRC goes, so goes much of Africa, certainly Central Africa.

And then Ambassador Balumuene, as I mentioned earlier, has served his country with distinction, now in the Diplomatic Corps for roughly a quarter century. He is a native of the Kasai Region of North-Central DRC. He went to college in Kinshasa. He has, as I said, served overseas in much of South and Southeast Asia, in New York City, in South Africa, and he has been President Kabila's Representative or Ambassador to the United States since last summer.

So, I think given the distinctive résumés we've got here, and just as a way to stop myself and make a clean break, let me, please, ask you to join me in welcoming them all to Brookings. (Applause) And so now we'll work down the line, starting with Anthony Gambino.

MR. GAMBINO: Thank you Mike. It's a pleasure to be here again and to share the podium with Special Envoy Perriello and Ambassador Balumuene. The Special Envoy is a global leader in working with the Congolese to find a pathway to peace. All of us are tremendously grateful for what he is doing.

We had a similar meeting at Brookings last November, and I stated then the Congo was already in electoral crisis, last November. Sadly, the situation has only deteriorated. Congo today is roughly one month away from a full-fledged constitutional crisis.

So, this morning, I'll try to do three things. First, I'll briefly talk about the critical constitutional issues. Second, I will discuss the views of civil society both Congolese and American on what to do. And third, I'll offer some closing thoughts on how to move forward. Of course I represent no one but myself in these remarks.

So first the facts of this crisis; perhaps the most important thing that I would ask you to remember is this crisis is entirely manufactured. Congo should not be at this point. The Congolese Constitution is clear. The Congolese presidency is term-limited. No one can serve more than two five-year terms. President Kabila, therefore, is nearing the end of his final term as Mike indicated in his opening comments.

No one, and I mean no one, including those who support President Kabila disputes this. Presidential elections must be held every five years. Congo has already had two elections, as Mike said, 2006, 2011 in fulfillment with the constitutional requirement.

On February 12, 2015, last year, the Congolese Independent Electoral Commission that I'll refer by its French initials as CENI, published a comprehensive electoral calendar. It scheduled Presidential National Assembly elections for November 27, 2016, with the inauguration of the new president on December 20, 2016.

Yet today we find ourselves in a situation where Congo is not ready for the constitutionally-required Presidential Election of 2016. Why is that? What's the problem? Well, last November this is what I said. I stated that President Kabila's

supporter have been doing everything they can to obstruct, delay and undercut the holding of national elections on time.

Judged by their actions this group has only one aim, keeping the President in power as long as possible. Regrettably, nothing has happened to suggest even the slightest alteration in that statement from last November. Rather, President Kabila himself has recently reinforced this by stating in Uganda just the other week that Congo will have an election. He didn't specify even whether it would be local or national, after the preparation of a new voter roll.

Well, what's wrong with that? Here's what's wrong, the preparation of the new voter roll is scheduled for completion about a year from now. As I already stated, the President's term, his final term expires on December 19<sup>th</sup>, in a few months. Also earlier this year the President obtained a ruling from a Constitutional Court stating that he can remain in office until his successor is inaugurated, however long that takes, is how he interprets it.

I won't discuss the debate around the merits of that decision, other than to say the opposition and Congolese civil society reject this interpretation.

Recent actions by the Congolese Government to remove Ida Sawyer, the Human Rights Watch Researcher based in Congo who is renowned for the quality and objectivity of her work, as well as dubious legal action taken against the leading opposition presidential candidate, Governor Moïse Katumbi, reinforced that the Congolese Government is moving in the wrong direction, and isn't taking the serious steps required to create an atmosphere of confidence that will respect the Constitution.

I now want to focus on an article of the Constitution that is so clear and so important that it is not subject to any ambiguity or debate about its meaning. Again,



no one disputes this. It's Article 73 of the Congolese Constitution which states in its entirety, I'm reading the entire article right now, "The electoral period, for the election of the President of the Republic is convened by the Congolese Independent Electoral Commission 90 days before the expiration of the mandate of the incumbent President." Done. That's the entire article.

The English translation is a bit awkward. We do it differently under our system, but for those of us who are Americans here, let me briefly note that the Congolese system is like that of many other countries in that there is a defined electoral period, leading up to an actual vote. In this case, that for a presidential election; that period, when and how long, is constitutionally mandated described by Article 73. "Therefore, the CENI must convene or declare the beginning of the official electoral period, leading up to the presidential election no later than September 20<sup>th</sup>." About a month from now, and surprisingly that date was on the calendar that that Electoral Commission published last February.

The present Head of the Electoral Commission, Corneille Nanga, had an historic opportunity to do this and fulfill his solemn constitutional obligation. Sadly, he hasn't proven to be up to the straightforward task of fulfilling his constitutional role. Instead he came to Washington this spring and complained, I was in the meetings, he complained that he didn't know what to do.

On the one hand he said, if I go in a certain direction, the government will criticize me, but if I go in the other direction the opposition will criticize me. What should I do? He asked. Well, what he should have done was read the Congolese Constitution which states unambiguously what he must do in about one month.

However, Mr. Nanga and other members of the Commission have stated

repeatedly that they will not be ready to do so, therefore, I'm sorry to have to say right now, that whatever statements anyone makes anywhere around September 20<sup>th</sup>, the Congo is in a full-fledged constitutional crisis as the fall begins. That's as sure as we are sitting here right now.

What should the international do? The U.S. has already begun a process of sanctions. The first round taken against just one man has already proven very effective. It's time now, this month, for the next round of sanctions. The types of persons to be sanctioned should be those who provide the most crucial assistance to President Kabila's unconstitutional efforts to remain in power.

For example, the Head of the Intelligence Service, Kalev Mutond, or perhaps another person central to the regime, the Head of the PPRD, Henri Mova Sakani. It's also time for the European Union to move to impose sanctions against these unconstitutional actions by Congo's leaders who violate human rights, close political space, and undermine constitutional democracy.

Let me also talk about the African Union. They've designated a facilitator, Edem Kodjo, to try to bring the sides together, and Mr. Kodjo has been at work for a long time, many months. Right now Congolese Bishops also are consulting with politicians to see if there is sufficient common ground for a dialogue to occur.

The essential problem is agreeing on what is to be discussed and whether the discussion will occur in good faith. The opposition, frankly, doubts the sincerity both of the Congolese Government and of Mr. Kodjo. But today some opposition leaders are talking with Mr. Kodjo and the bishops, while others refuse to consider a dialogue as long as Kodjo remains the facilitator.

Many people have called on the Congolese Government to build

confidence in this process, by opening political space through the release of political prisoners, and encouraging the participation of major political actors, such as Governor Katumbi. To date the government has not done this, and in the absence of any confidence-building measures, frankly it's difficult to imagine a successful dialogue. I'll say a bit more about this at the end of my remarks.

Let me move to the Congolese Opposition and civil society. First, I want to emphasize a really important point, crucial, that usually is overlooked. The Congolese Opposition, political and civil society is entirely peaceful. All of its leaders have embraced the principles of nonviolence.

How important is that, in a country that's been torn apart by multiple wars and rebellions over the last few decades? And it's still not completely at peace in parts of the Eastern Congo. We were reading about horrific killings around the eastern city of Beni just the other day.

The opposition's courageous stance of nonviolence must be celebrated, cherished, nourished, encouraged and protected. Unfortunately, the Congolese police and military have garnered a global reputation for brutality, violence and lawlessness. Remarkably, they respected the opposition's right of peaceful assembly last month when opposition leader, Etienne Tshisekedi, returned to Kinshasa.

And when he and other opposition leaders held an enormous peaceful rally a few days after his return; it wasn't an accident. U.S. sanctions against Kinshasa's Police Chief, Celestin Kanyama, helped provide a very important incentive for greatly improved behavior when the police saw themselves to be in the international spotlight.

But make no mistake, the police and military remain armed and dangerous. The opposition has stated its intention to continue such protests if Congo

moves into a period of unconstitutionality this fall. Their right to peaceful assembly must be respected. And in that regard, I also want to say, thank goodness for MONUSCO, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force, which still has about 20,000 armed men and women in Kinshasa and based around the country.

They also played a key role recently in keeping the peace by deploying around Kinshasa to make it clear that they were watching as these major rallies took place. MONUSCO has two strategic priorities mandated by the United Nations Security Council. "The first is the protection of civilians;" the second is to support, I'm quoting, "The creation of an environment conducive to peaceful, credible and timely elections. MONUSCO needs to be prepared to act during this upcoming dangerous to protect civilians and provide a constitutional solution to Congo's current growing crisis."

As we've said, President Kabila's final term ends on December 19<sup>th</sup>. In the absence of any constitutional solution, the opposition is called to public protest throughout the fall. If no solution has been found by December 19<sup>th</sup>, the Opposition is called for the President's departure from office; President Kabila has already indicated his intention to remain.

So, how can this crisis be avoided? What's the way forward? In ending, I have a few suggestions. First, there is neither the time nor the need for wide-ranging discussion of multiple issues in any dialogue that begin. The only issues for discussion among Congolese political leaders are these two. First, "How to arrange for," and I'm quoting the relevant U.N. Security Council Resolution, "A free, fair, credible, inclusive, transparent, peaceful and timely electoral process, which respects the Congolese Constitution?"

Second, if somehow that process cannot be completed by December 20,

then what happens? I will not get into the debate of all the details about what could happen under the second scenario, but I'll make two points. First, the Congolese Constitution has to be respected; therefore, any solution of what to do after the 19<sup>th</sup> needs to follow and respect the Constitution.

Second, if one does that that requires the holding of presidential elections, if not in 2016, as early as possible in 2017. No delay beyond that is impossible, period. That should be a given and really not subject to any debate or discussion.

Congo is entering a period of maximum danger and it's crucial, therefore, that a way forward be found that respects the constitution and avoids bloodshed. I really believe that with good faith and continued efforts by the Congolese elite and the people of the Congo, by governments like my own led by people like, Special Envoy Perriello, by critical international organizations like the U.N., the African Union, the European Union, and other concerned citizens and groups around the world, finding a peaceful way forward, a path of peace, while difficult, still remains possible. Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you, Tony. Very powerful. (Applause)  
Congressman Perriello, over to you my friend.

MR. PERRIELLO: Thank you for having me. And thanks for doing this event. It's particularly an important time to be trying to get attention around the world to the situation in the DRC where the clock is ticking. Because I want to make sure there is time for the audience to participate, I'll probably just say a few remarks, plus my statements are out in the press all the time, so people kind of know where I come down on this.

We used to call, when I was living in Sierra Leone, we would actually call

August Africa month, because it was one of the few times you could actually break through with news about Africa into the international press. Unfortunately, if you noted at the beginning, we can't compete with beach volleyball. I have neither the talent nor the height to do so, but this is a crucial time.

Let me just make a general comment about the constitutional position that Obama has put out there, as a specific point about, why the surprise in DRC, and then something about where we stand. President Obama did not pull this issue of term limits out of thin air. Yes, he's a constitutional law professor and believes in the importance of that as a fundamental break point, but the U.S. Government also ran data on this, and we showed that in countries where incumbents try to change the rules to stay in power, those countries are five times more likely to face violence and instability.

Those countries that have transitions are far more likely to see economic growth, in both foreign direct investment and internal economic growth. The data is very clear on this. Even in situations where there is broad consent about extending an incumbent's range in power, like a Nelson Mandela kind of situation; even in those situations the data suggests that alternance is crucial for both stability and investment, but it's even more true in situations where there is not broad consent.

I think it's fair to say, even under the most generous reading of the political situation in DRC, as we'll discuss, that there is not some groundswell of grassroots support for a change to the constitutional replacement.

Unfortunately, we know this, not just from the data, but we know this next door in Burundi where President Nkurunziza, who a very popular president at the time, of his decision to change the Constitution and barrel forward with what was a controversial decision. Even in that situation you saw the integration of stability and 10 years of

progress on post-conflict reconciliation.

Ten years of unbelievably courageous work by the Burundian people across safe communities, private sector and the military to get beyond some of the divisions of the past. So this was not a randomly-selected policy by the President, it also happens to be one of his most -- popular among the African people, polled across all countries though not as popular among African leaders, as you may guess.

Secondly, I think it's important to look at this issue about alternance in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo. There's some discussion about, you know, what role the U.S. has to play in imposing such a position. But the benefit in this situation is, we are not. Our policy is entirely determined by the Congolese Constitution, by the Congolese Amendment about term limits, and by the overwhelming popular support in every poll, and every bit of research and analysis that the Congolese people are very proud of their Constitution.

And they are very excited to have an election and have the opportunity of alternance. Not based on any personal animosity towards the leader, but based on a belief that one of the great products of President Kabila and his family has been to establish a constitutional democracy and that this is an opportunity to turn the corner.

It's also important to note, and I think His Excellency President Kabila deserves a lot of credit for this, we have seen a diversity of civil society and in the media in the DRC that is unrivaled within the region. It's a country where, I think, to the credit of the government, there has been over recent years real space for civil society, real space for opposition parties and real space for the media.

Unfortunately, over the last year we've seen significant closing of that space, including intimidation and arrest of youth activists, which tends to be, obviously, a

sign of desperation of a weak regime, not signs of a strong regime. And I think this is not just unfortunate in terms of raising the risk of instability, but of undermining a really proud legacy that the DRC generally, and President Kabila specifically have helped to establish.

On the positive side though, as was noted, we've seen over and over again that the Congolese people are ready for a constitutional democracy and embrace it. There's not -- And we sometimes hear arguments from the government that make me believe we have more confidence in the Congolese people than they do. We saw hundreds of thousands of people come out in the streets multiple times just in this month. If the police do not instigate, the Congolese people are capable of rallying peacefully as has happened before; whether that's at the funeral of a prominent musician or the return of an opposition figure.

So when we think about this assumption that if there are people exercising their constitutional rights, it leads to instability, that's a passing of the buck. The question is what is the spark that leads to instability?

In the absence of the crackdown, the Congolese people are incredibly mature in their approach to the democratic process, which is a good thing. Unfortunately though, while there is much to be said about the positive success story of DRC, we do see tensions rising. We have seen prominent Congolese leaders intimidated or run out of the country or, in the case of youth activists, are still sitting in prison.

We also see rising concerns both in the country and among the neighbors about the introduction of inflation, about concerns about budgetary finances in the government, and the concern that even under the best of political stability and certainty, some of these are issues that could have real human impacts in a country where many, many people still remain extremely poor and on the informal economy, but



also looking at the questions of regional stability.

So, that leads me to where we stand right now, and while I share most if not all of what Tony outlined as the downside risks, which are very real, if we do not find a negotiated solution in this case, I think these very disturbing scenarios which could involve violence are real. I think it's also important to keep an eye on the positive story here. It is not past the point where DRC could have its first peaceful democratic transition in the history of the country.

This is an incredible turning point for the DRC. And again I think it is one where President Kabila and his family would deserve heroic credit, where MONUSCO would deserve props. And most of all the Congolese people would deserve the opportunity to see what country after country has seen, which is after a brutal civil war or regional war, seeing that first period of *alternance* is often the turning point where you start to see real gains on stability, real gains on investment, real gains in stability and all of these areas.

So we do need to be extremely concerned about the downside risks, but I also want us to keep in mind the possibility of DRC as a great success story, and talking about Congolese exceptionalism. Sometimes we look at the fact that other leaders in the region done this, and therefore why is President Kabila different? And see that in sort of a negative light.

Well, think of it in a positive light. What if DRC continues to become the model, the model of a more democratic and open society, a model of a stronger constitutional democracy? We all know the natural capital and human capital is there for that opportunity. So, I think we want to be supportive of both the government and the Congolese people in what could be an extremely exciting time.

That having been said, I think the window for that happy story, the window for that positive step is narrowing and narrowing quickly. Some deadlines have come and gone, but the current one appears to be now until September 19<sup>th</sup>, where at least some significant leaders in the opposition feel that is the beginning of the constitutional crisis.

That means we are looking now at a, you know, six-week period, a four-to six-week period, depending on when you see this coming together. Where, tensions will calcify, sides will calcify, and we are already seeing that in terms of confidence in both areas.

There is an opportunity right now for everybody in this scenario to walk away a winner depending on how you define winning. To me if President Kabila gets to be one of the great heroes on the continent of seeing his country into a period of peace, into a period of constitutional democracy, and showing the statesmanship to go while he's still young enough to remain a major powerbroker in the country and across the continent and could have a comeback in years to come, that to me is a great outcome for him and certainly for the country.

The problem is, the closer this gets to a conflict dynamic, the closer this gets to being decided in the streets, those opportunities disappear. His option set gets worse, not better, as this gets closer to a crisis. But there is a lot of needing to help people see those opportunities.

And the next few steps, and this is where Tony and I sometimes disagree a little bit, these steps are going to be determined not by the U.S., and not by the international community, but by the Congolese people. The international community can affect things in the margin. We can try to incentivize, protecting open political space.

We can try to encourage what a hero's departure looks like and other things; but ultimately this is going to be a chapter written by the Congolese people. And we hope it's one that's written together.

And I think that's just where I want to end. There's a lot of talk about the Kodjo dialogue, and we fully support it and think it's incredibly important that everyone participate in it. You know, is it a dialogue? Is it a negotiation? Is it with Kodjo? Is it the support team? I understand why all those details matter, but ultimately what matters most at this point is people making the acts of statesmanship and compromise, that bring everyone to the table and allow for a negotiated solution.

And I do believe the power to do so right now rests overwhelmingly with the government. Yes, the opposition is a key player in this, but the conditions for dialogue are primarily being determined by the confidence-building measures that the government chooses to take or not take.

A few weeks ago they had a great opportunity where there was discussion about a significant release of political prisoners and pardoning of political opponents. This was probably the single best thing that could have happened to give the dialogue a real chance.

It is very difficult for people to feel like they are being invited to a dialogue at the same time they are being intimidated and arrested. So, I think at this point when we think about this, yes, it's true many opposition leaders are holding out on dialogue, we are pushing them to participate, but people are also in an environment where they are looking to see: Are we going into a genuine negotiation about how to move a country forward according to the Constitution and the Security Council? Or are we walking into a trap?

And there is a trust gap right now, and both sides have legitimate reasons to see the other side as the bad guy, the reason that we are not at dialogue, the reason there is no trust. And there's only so much we can do from the outside. I think there are actions that leaders can take right now to create genuine space between now and September 19<sup>th</sup>. After that time, I think the options and the ability to control things decline significantly.

So, I still think this is an opportunity for this to be one of the great chapters for DRC, and for DRC to really be the model, even for the whole region, and see a lot of benefits come in the wake of that, but the good scenarios get less likely as we get closer to these deadlines, and the bad scenarios get more likely. We see this, next month really as a crucial period, and we hope all of us, including in the international community, will be constructive partners in that transition.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you, Special Envoy Perriello. I have two quick clarifying questions, and then we'll go to the Ambassador. I think I heard you say that were Kabila to step down he could potentially have the comeback. Is the constitution about two terms lifetime, or two terms consecutive? Where's the limit?

MR. PERRIELLO: It's consecutive.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay, so he could in theory step down and then run again.

MR. PERRIELLO: He could.

MR. O'HANLON: And then the other question is, the state of sanctions today and maybe just a quick word, maybe, from each of you. Exactly where does this stand? Is the U.S. Executive Branch essentially invoking authorities that have been there a while, or is this due to very recent congressional action? If I could start with you, Mr.

Special Envoy, and then Tony can say a quick word?

MR. PERRIELLO: We've had an Executive Authority for a few years now that includes both threats of violence, instability and gross human rights abuses, but also undermining of democratic institutions and the democratic process. The recent sanction of Police Chief Kanyama was done under offices. Separately, Capitol Hill has been engaged in the debate over sanctions, calling in a bipartisan way for stronger consequences in some of these areas related to these issues.

I think that's again, our coequal branches will continue to be both actions there. We all know that ultimately the Hill controls the power of the purse, those of us who are in the House of Representatives, like to remind everyone it starts in House of Representatives, the people's House. My friends in the State Department don't always like being reminded of that.

But, yes. So, the Hill ultimately can look at budget authorities, but there's existing authority under an Executive Order to pursue individual sanctions and consequences.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Anything you want to add? And then my last clarifying point; earlier I said that Congo is the third most populous country in Africa. Technically it would be the fourth if you count Egypt; but it's the third most populous in Sub-Saharan Africa.

So, thank you for waiting, Mr. Ambassador; over to you, good sir.

MR. BALUMUENE: Okay. Thank you. (Speaking in French) So, what we would like clarify today is how the electoral process works in the DRC, and I would like to give some clarification on the situation.

After the presentations of Mr. Thomas Perriello and Mr. Anthony

Gambino, I would like to say -- give clarifications -- I would like to give some clarifications on the five following points. Who has the organizational power over the elections in the DRC? Why do we have a delay in the electoral process? What is the validity of the inclusive national dialogue; the interpretation of Article 70, second paragraph of the Constitution? And after I'm going to talk about the irrational war and the troubles of the DRC after December 2016.

The dispositions of the Article 211 of the Constitution, the organization of the elections of the DRC, and it will explain the competence of the CENI, which is the National Commission of the Independent Electorate. Actually the CENI, which is the National Commission of the Independent Electorate, has some obstacles to face. The first one is a technical one. So we had two elections, the one in 2006 and the one in 2011. In 2006 we had help in the elections from external partners. Things went really well.

And actually the elections were foreseen to be held in 2005 but we actually postponed them and they were held in 2006. Technically the CENI, which is the National Commission of the Independent Electorate, had foreseen the elections in 2011, and actually everybody was against it and contested it, to hold elections in 2011.

That's why we decided to reorganize the election process and have a credible process. The second issue, we have 42 million people to register to vote, and we have 10 million new young people, young adults to register. And now the new law is that also the Congolese people that live in foreign countries have the right to vote.

So, the question now is, why didn't we process that already in 2011? The elections were held at the end of 2011, in December 2011. And after we right away went 2012, and things were functioning fine, and the funds for the future elections were

set apart. In 2013 and 2014 we were facing a war -- a Rebel War, M-23. Before this situation, because of the less funds it was a difficult situation to prepare the elections, to organize we need funds and we need money; and the budgets were affected.

In the year 2015 and 2016 we had a very difficult economy. We were completely depending on everything that we were exporting; we were completely dependent on our export. And we saw a decline in prices of raw materials, especially copper and petrol. Our budget had to be -- had to go -- it had to be down -- it was revised down, sorry.

I would like to explain again that we had time to prepare the elections of 2011 and the same situation is happening in 2016. Also we have to look at the opposition in terms of the calendar that we were proposing, and other questions. Everybody now talks about the month of December, the month that President Kabila should leave office, actually the end of his term will be in that period, end of December.

Everybody that's talking about the end of his term, of President Kabila, is not talking about what should happen next. They don't give any solution what should happen afterwards. President Kabila is proposing that we should have a dialogue, what should happen next, so it can prepare the way and to go through the electoral process in a peaceful way, and after the elected president will take function and start his new term.

So the big question is: what will happen after the end of December? There are two options, important options possible today. We could have a solution that we would prolong his term, he is not looking for a new term, it's the prolonging of his existing term after December. This is also confirm the constitution that the President can continue with his existing term, till we have elected a new president.

The second solution can be found together with opposition and also

external partners. To use the street and the protest in the street, and that would eventually push Kabila out. And nobody could foresee what a chaos this would create. We have to make sure, if we look at the Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to stay a stable country, and we should make sure that we look for stability and a peaceful process.

So we should avoid any dangerous situation, unstable situation, and make sure that things don't go out of control in this important Central Region of Africa. We should avoid and we should not create a second Libya in Africa. I would like to thank you all. (Applause)

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you very much Mr. Ambassador. And so, what I would like to do is ask you to start getting ready with your questions, and we'll have a microphone. Once I call on you, please, identify yourself, and please limit yourself to one question; if you want to pose it for a specific person that's preferred but not obligatory.

But before we that I'm going ask Tony and Special Envoy Perriello if they want to make any brief response to the ambassador. Tony why don't you go ahead first?

MR. GAMBINO: Okay. Thank you very much. First of all, I want to thank the Ambassador. I think it's important that Brookings invited the Representative of the Government to present the views on how to move forward. And I'll just say a few things because I do want to get to the broader questions.

The first, I don't know anyone, no governments, no international organization, no Congolese actor, be he or she in the opposition or the government, no civil society member, either Congolese, American or European, who looks for the implosion of the Congo, or for disaster. Everyone wants to avoid this and find a way out.

And that's why I emphasized the peaceful nature of the opposition, that



we do not have, thank goodness, a situation where there are armed rebellions. Let's remember, just 20 years ago we had, in the Congo, we had multiple armed groups fighting over the territory of the Congo. We do not have this today. That is a great gift that has come from actions by President Kabila and others, actually, over this period, to create the opportunity now.

The second point I would like to make is, as I tried to suggest, the constitution has multiple arguments, and frankly one does not need to be a constitutional scholar to see one's way clear. The Ambassador focused on one Article, Article 70, which I'll refer to briefly, and it's subject to multiple interpretations, but he gave the one that the Constitutional Court provided, and that the government holds to.

But then there's the other article that the opposition talks about, and that I stated, which is Article 73. That's another article of the Constitution, every bit as valid as Article 70. And Article 73 creates a clear unamendable obligation to the Electoral Commission to declare the process for the election of the President open 90 days before the expiration of the incumbent president's term.

And that's an article of the constitution that has no other clause that says it can be amended, that, well, you need to be ready, or maybe if you don't like it you can do otherwise. No. It says it in black and white very clearly what needs to be done.

And so, if that's not done, I think just from a constitutional point of view one falls, sadly, into an unconstitutional state regardless of how one interprets Article 70. So then, of course what we are all trying to discuss is: What's the way out? And I think, if I could be so bold, I think actually we all agree, that's it's to find a way for particularly the political elite of the Congo. I am certainly not suggesting, and I hope I never have, that the United States should or could impose a solution on the Congo.

That's not the role of the American Government, and as the Special Envoy said, that's not what the United States is attempting to do in any way this time around. But it's for the crucial Congolese actors to come together now and have a series discussion and compromise, because compromises will have to be made, on how to move forward.

And I'll end by stating that it is my view, I'll just echo what the Special Envoy said, that if confidence could be created, what's lacking right now is confidence. There's a lot of mistrust around, and there have been opportunities where people have been looking for the government to take steps to show that they were ready for these kinds of difficult discussions. We have not seen those serious confidence-building measures yet.

But I'll state again, as I did in my comments, again, what I think we all believe, it's not too late -- it's very late, you know, if you're thinking of the clock ticking towards midnight, we are well past 11:00 p.m. I think we are past 11:30 p.m. We are maybe at 10 minutes before midnight or something, but the clock hasn't struck midnight yet.

MR. O'HANLON: Special Envoy Perriello, anything to add?

MR. PERRIELLO: First of all, thank you for the comments. I think there is, as you can see, plenty of room to find a reasonable solution and a consensus path forward. But if a small fire has started in the basement of your house and everyone spends their energy focused on who started the fire instead of how to put the fire out, then that fire is going to grow, and it's going to get bigger.

And I think right now both sides are focused a bit on establishing who started the fire instead of how to put out. And the solution to putting out seems very

clear, there are statements President Kabila could make today that would immediately defuse tension and create more space. There are actions he could take today that would immediately create more space for genuine dialogue.

So, I think if this goes in a bad direction, which we hope it does not, people will look back at this period, and the actions that each side took, and some of the missed opportunities by the government to build confidence and assessing that. But the focus right now shouldn't be on the blame about the fire, but how to get the fire out, and make the house stronger.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Let's go to you. I'm going to take two questions at a time. We will start, here, in the third row, the gentlemen, and then the woman in the second row. Take those two together.

This one is not working, I don't think. Do you have a different microphone?

MR. AKUETTEH: My name is Nii Akuetteh. I work with the African Immigrants' Caucus. And I'm taking the opportunity to look; instead of the Congo, and how it moves forward which is very important to look at the strategy of U.S. policy in Africa. A couple of -- You know, 10 days ago, the President talked to the YALI fellows. And he was asked about how the U.S. chooses to impose sanctions on some countries, for their bad behavior, and not on others.

And he said, well, when we have security issues, our security cooperation with friends, yeah, we cooperate with them, we don't ostracize them, but we talk to them. I think the problem with that is that then it sets a bad example. So, to bring it to the Congo, my personal view is, if I were President Kabila, I'm looking at President Kagame, and President Museveni. And saying, they have done worse things, they have

stayed longer. The U.S. is not pushing them out, so why should I listen to you? That's just me. But tell me where I'm wrong.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay. And then he'll take this also.

MS. SEPHOCLE: My name is Marilyn Sephacle, Dr. Marilyn Sephacle. I'm the President of the Women Ambassador Foundation. My comment, it's more a comment than a question; the Congo was the victim of King Leopold, back in the -- after the Berlin Conference. King Leopold took Congo as its personal property and decimated millions of King Leopold of Belgium, decimated millions of Congolese people. A century later we had a promising leader by the name of Patrice Lumumba. He was killed by the West. Why should Congo today take advice from the West?

MR. O'HANLON: Let me turn it into a question; that was pretty good. Okay. So why don't we -- Why don't we start with Tony and just work down?

MR. GAMBINO: I'll just say something about the second question. I certainly, in what I was discussing today, was focused very much on the views and aspirations of people with whom I'm in contact who are Congolese, and trying to understand and speak to what people in the Congo are looking for now. This is a very different situation than the circumstance of the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, when the horrors under Leopold were perpetrated as you suggested, or the very end of the Colonial period in the 1960s, the beginnings of the Postcolonial Congo.

And I think it's quite important to constantly underscore that some of us here are trying very hard, actually, I'll speak I think a little more broadly for the people I work with in American civil society. We try very hard to stay in close contact with members of Congolese civil society, and to understand how they see the situation, what they would like to do, and to share and exchange. And I consider it a very healthy and a

useful exchange.

And it is not one, and I'm very happy about this, where it is the United States or Europe or anywhere else who is attempting with a fist to make changes, as yes, was the case in the past. Rather, I and others want to learn from and transmit the views of the extremely courageous, articulate and committed people in the Congo, whether it's the youth that Special Envoy Perriello referred to, working in organizations like Lucha and Felimbi or many others.

The larger civil society organizations represented in Kinshasa, or the provinces throughout the country, active civil society gatherings that are going on now, as well as the extremely vibrant set of senior political actors and political parties that are all pushing for the kinds of things that are under discussion today. So the situation that prevails in 2016, globally, is quite different than the ones you referred to in the past. And thank goodness that's a move in a good direction.

MR. O'HANLON: Special Envoy Perriello, any comment.

MR. PERRIELLO: Sure. I mean, this is obviously something that could be atoned to our discussion, I think the question is, what are the right lessons to have learned from the past? And I think one of the lessons is -- could be none engagement at all, or it could be that we should stay with the aspirations of the people, not with corrupt elites.

And I think when we look at Congo there's a clear aspiration of the people, and the United States policy has been entirely informed by the Congolese people. That doesn't always mean that everyone in the elite is going to be in touch with that. I also think the issue of non-engagement in the global world is complicated. If you look at where the investment is coming from today, or the major corporate and

government intervention, it's not from the West, it's from across Africa, it's China, it's other places.

So, if you look at the history of how the Kabila family came into power, this is this question about when you go back and talk about something that is essentially Congolese, independent of outside or exogenous forces, as you know very well, gets extremely complicated very quickly. But I think part of what we've tried to learn from this, is that in the past when we have stood against the aspirations and the wills of the people, we've regretted it looking back. And where we've stood with people, the people of the country, we have been on solid ground.

I think there's no question in this case that the Congolese people like the constitution. They want it respected. They want an election that's just isn't being imposed from the outside. The only thing standing in the way is leaders in their own government.

So, I think with the question of sanctions, you know, we try to get smart about this as well. I think there's more controversy about where you sanctioning an entire government, or programs that are seen as supporting the people versus trying to be more surgical about targeting particular actors who are creating instability or limiting the rights of their own citizens.

In terms of, you know, U.S. engagement, certainly there's a lot in our history to answer for, and those are all legitimate questions to be raised, but I think in this case it could be more clear that we are standing in partnership with the Congolese people. And I think when we extended to do that in the past, it's something that has been -- something we would look back on positively.

MR. O'HANLON: Mr. Ambassador, any comments?

MR. BALUMUENE: Yeah. (Speaking in French) I would like to say that President Kabila has organized the first elections in this country. And he also organized the second elections in 2009. He could have changed Constitution in those years if he wanted to, like a lot of other presidents in Africa had done. There were important people in his government that have asked in 2009 to change to Constitution, but he said, no.

Rwanda has changed the constitution. Our direct neighbor has done this process and they have changed the constitution. Like a lot of times this has happened, we could have done it as well. But our President has said no. I want to have a democratic culture in this country. So what I'm asking for to have these elections now, we need time to pass calmly to the next election, he will not gain a second term, nor will he stay in office -- a third term -- sorry -- a third term.

MR. O'HANLON: Very good. Okay. Let's take two more questions. Here in the second row, and then behind her in the third row, and I will try to work back the following round.

MS. HARRINGTON: Hi. My name is Bridget Harrington, and I'm President of Harrington Dorsey. I understand how you sanction a country, but what I don't understand is how you sanction an individual.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay. That's a good question. And then in the third row, the gentleman back, in the blue shirt.

SPEAKER: My name Alka Matamba. I have two questions. One is for Mr. Ambassador, and the other one is for Mr. Perriello.

MR. O'HANLON: Keep them short please, then, because the rule is one question.

SPEAKER: Sure. I'll try to combine.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay.

SPEAKER: Mr. Ambassador, the question I'm asking pretty much is about the organization of the elections. You mentioned that one of the reasons was lack of funds because the funds were displaced for the war some time ago. Will the Government of Mr. Kabila accept money to organize these elections from friends, like the United States and other European countries? To Mr. Perriello, my question is basically to clarify a little bit what you meant by negotiated solution to the crisis in the Congo.

MR. O'HANLON: This is great. We have one question for the panelists. So, Tony, do you want to take the first?

MR. GAMBINO: I'll pass.

MR. O'HANLON: Okay. Okay.

MR. PERRIELLO: All right. So, first of the sanctions question, I think it's important to note that the U.S. sanctions only apply to things inside that tiny. We cannot affect what happens inside the DRC. So this only affects assets inside the United States, or travel to United States, so as a sovereign country we have a right to make decisions about an individual to the extent that they are touching U.S.-related activities.

We do not have the ability to go in and, you know, affect that vis-à-vis the DRC dynamics. In a global banking environment, some of those things you have the spill-on effects. But governments have the right to do that, and travel bans and other activities and focus on individuals. I think the feeling over recent years has been when you sanction an entire government, there are at least some folks who feel like that can end up affecting the people who have not necessarily done the bad acts that are creating the negative effects. People are welcome to disagree with it, but that's the legal basis for it.



And I think on the issue of -- I wanted to add just one other comment actually to the earlier thing, which I think is really important to reiterate. That is different, perhaps, than how some things have happened in the past, which is that the United States does not take a position on any party or any candidate in this case. I think in the past we have, in some cases, tried to hand-pick or play the chess game out.

I think there are countries, for good reason, that are skeptical that we really mean that when we say it, but we really do. I couldn't care less whether majority wins or the opposition wins this election. The U.S. position is that the election should happen, and the Congolese people should determine the future. Not everyone around the world shares that approach to the situation, but it is our genuine believe that what's important is the process, and that it's the will of the Congolese people.

We've made that certainly clear to the opposition over and over again, and we have made that clear to the government as well. And I frankly think they are very competent leaders on both the majority and the opposition that we could imagine in a variety of positions.

On the issue of negotiated solution, I'm being intentionally vague because we think our answer to the question of what it should look like, is whatever works. Whatever gets a broad enough consensus about how to address what is a fairly limited number of issues right now and a fairly limited timeframe, goes forward. The big game in town is the Kodjo dialogue, so it seems that the best way to proceed is to figure out how to take that formulation and figure out whatever tweaks need to be made to bring, you know, all the sides to the table there.

But we don't go into it with a preconceived notion that there's a particular format, et cetera. We know that there are a limited number of issues, which basically

come down to how soon the elections can be held, a statement of non-candidacy and what the government looks like between December 19<sup>th</sup> and then, and the issue of whether everyone is going to be allowed to participate free of intimidation.

I mean, we can come up with a list, but it's not a huge number of things. So I think from whether -- We don't want to get stuck on the words dialogue or negotiation, or Kodjo dialogue versus African Union dialogue, I think our belief is it should be what works, and it should be what the key Congolese stakeholders accept as legitimate, and that's not for us to determine.

What we can say is that the current solution isn't there yet. Clearly we don't have all of the key actors to the table in a way that could reach a consensus solution to head off this problem. So when we say, how we look at confidence-building measures from the government, how could push the opposition to be more open to this dialogue, I think our ultimate bottom line is what works, what brings people to the table that can find a path on this limited set of issues.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Mr. Ambassador?

MR. BALUMUENE: (Speaking in French) I would like to confirm that in 2006 we have received external funds for the elections. In 2011 Congo has financed, themselves, the election. So now we have asked for external help, looking at the funds issues that we have, we already have liberated funds of \$330 million to start register the voters. And we also wait for the part of our external partners.

MR. O'HANLON: Very good. Okay. Let's take another round. So we'll go over to this side; and we'll take three this time, the gentleman in the second row, and then the two sitting next to each other in the fourth row. This may wind up being the final round, so make it the lighting round, one question each, please.

SPEAKER: Thanks for the opportunity. My name is Derek Madikalago, native of Washington, D.C. A question, Mr. Ambassador; thanks for the clarity. It sounds like when, before you try to explain that Mr. Kabila was trying to do a transition without holding onto power. Can you name a few names of the opposition candidates that think they are not given a fair share and that's the reason why all this is coming up, that Mr. Kabila wants to change the constitution? Can you give us a few names? And from the last that I heard, Mr. Katumbi was the biggest frontrunner against Mr. Kabila. Is that true as of right now?

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. And then the two in the fourth row, right.

SPEAKER: Danielle Mack from the State Department, from the Bureau of African Affairs. I'm interested in, if you can speak a little bit about the U.S. Government should think about its security sector reform programming going forward, in light of the political uncertainties with the environment; and specifically with regards to objectives and priorities for security assistance.

MR. O'HANLON: Thanks.

MR. LEZHNEV: Sasha Lezhnev from the Enough Projects. My question is to the Ambassador. There is, of course, the political crisis, but also the economic crisis with commodity prices lowered and increased inflation, which could exacerbate the political crisis. So I'm curious what the government's strategy is to try to address this economic crisis. Thank you.

MR. O'HANLON: Thank you. Why don't we start with Ambassador this time, and we'll work towards -- Just take whichever question you want.

MR. BALUMUENE: (Speaking in French) What I would like to say about the presidents that would be elected, I already have registered seven possible candidates

here in the Embassy.

In Congo we have even like 20 candidates registered. You have to know that we have more than 400 political parties in Congo. So you will notice that this is very difficult, to name some candidates, seeing the big number of possible candidates. To talk about the economic crisis, the Congo doesn't establish that commodity prices like all the other underdeveloped countries. The prices are fixed regarding the needs.

We would like to control the crisis -- we would like to diversify our economy to not be too dependent on the materials that we export. That's what the government is trying to do to control the price that comes from the outside.

MR. O'HANLON: Special Envoy?

MR. PERRIELLO: First, let me just concur that much of the economic crisis that's coming is not the government fault that was a lot of exogenous factors like commodity prices. Nonetheless, it does introduce another reason to be concerned about stability, and about the role the street may play in coming months. So regardless of what caused that issue, it is certain something we are tracking very closely both for human implications for those who are living on the margins, but also the broader security and political implications.

Second, on opposition leaders, as I said before, my job is a lot easier because we are not taking sides. So I don't have to get into all of the politics. As a former politician myself I will just say, observing it, but I actually think it's quite fascinating. I think that people will focus on how many candidates there are, and people seeming to change sides, but that's not necessarily a sign of unhealthy politics. It can be a sign of healthy politics, that people will form coalitions, they will break coalition.

Sure, I'm sure some of it will not be for the most ideologically or

financially pure reasons, but nonetheless, what you're seeing, I think, a lot of in the last year, is genuine coalition politics and trying to distinguish those people who do have a constituency from those people who are just an individual running around wanting to be a candidate.

So, as a political observer I would just say it's really fascinating to see how dynamic that environment is, and that will only, I think, intensify over the next year, and it's not about producing the perfect candidates. It's fair to many Americans are not content with our major party candidates here. I am not here to comment on that, but that's, you know, that's part of how a political system works, is much about the parties and the coalitions that come together.

On security sector reform, I think is something the U.S. Government wants to continue and is continuing to pursue a top priority. It's something President Kabila has certainly emphasized a great deal. I think there are opportunities to see ongoing progress in the FDLR as well where we had seen things stagnate for some period of time. And I hope that the remaining period for President Kabila, he sees as a chance to solidify on some of his legacies. I think he has many to point to.

As we mentioned earlier the fact that he really pushed to the Sun City Accords which was not what people expected of him at first. He pushed for the Constitution. He allowed elections to happen. He has addressed gender-based violence within the military. And security sector reform is something else that he has raised as a priority.

So I think we want to focus a lot on this political situation because it's the big elephant in the room but, you know, it goes parallel with many of these other things. What I will say about both security sector reform, as I started out saying about economic

development and foreign direct investment is that these -- that *alternance* does affect this in every country. The extent to which people feel like they've passed the period where you are in a post-conflict environment, which I think is how many people still see DRC. Or is this a stable constitutional democracy?

And I think the next year, however it plays out, is going to determine the extent to which we get on a path in a direction towards greater investment and greater stability. As a country that spends a lot of money supporting MONUSCO every year, no one would be more excited than us to see MONUSCO fade out over the years ahead, because the capacity exists internally to do that, because we've addressed negative forces in the East.

So I think these things have to run in parallel to each other, but I think political uncertainty is rarely the ally of stability and it's rarely the ally of these medium to long-term investments, whether it's investment in a policy-like security sector reform or the economy.

So, again, we see this as still something that could be a great chapter for DRC, whether it's a turning of the page, and I think there's lots of room for His Excellency and others to get a lot of credit for that. But if this goes badly I think it will tarnish a lot of those positive steps that were taken, and will end up being a defining moment in a different direction.

MR. O'HANLON: Tony?

MR. GAMBINO: Just a little bit about the question regarding security sector reform. Security sector reform in the Congo has been focused on for a long time with a very mixed record. It's very difficult to do. What I would say about it now is this is not a time for mixed messages, and it's a time for focusing on priorities.

So let's think about the 2006 election. The Congolese and the international community were united in wanting to have good elections in 2006, but there was a sense that the army could potentially play a negative role because that command and control abilities weren't good, the ability to commit violence against civilians was, unfortunately, very high. And a decision was taken not to ramp up security sector reform but that the Army stay in the barracks during the electoral period. And that the police be given the role working with the then the MONUC, that's what the United Nations Group was called at the time, to ensure the peaceful holding of elections, and it worked.

The military stayed in their barracks and the elections of 2006 were remarkably peaceful throughout the Congo. We have a similar challenge when elections will take place this time. I am not advocating the same action be taken as in 2006, not at all; 10 years have passed. But that we think about what is appropriate to be done when what we want is to see, as Special Envoy Perriello has said again and again in his comments, the alternation of power, *alternance* in French, therefore via elections, and we want those elections to be free, fair, credible, peaceful, transparent, et cetera.

And there's a military with a record and unfortunately much of that record is bad. So rather than thinking about long-term goals in the security sector reform which, of course, are ultimately important, the essential now is to say, how can a military be part of the solution that has opened political space for political expression, for peaceful demonstration, for the other things that are part of a democratic process whereby people can come together, look at the candidates, make their decision, and ultimately on election day go and vote for the candidate of their choice.

MR. O'HANLON: I'm just going to add one very last point of my own, in conclusion on this question, which is that even though it may not be the moment for this

kind of a bigger, longer-term policy concept, I still like to argue that the United States Military should consider offering up to a brigade force. And what I mean by that is, depending on how you size it, 2 to 3,000 personnel, to build on the excellent model that was created in Afghanistan, something called the Security Force Assistance Brigade, where we break down the traditional war-fighting unit into a number of smaller advisory teams.

Get out in the field with the military we are trying to help improve, and it helps you, first of all, get to know the leader, so you can provide advice to the president of that country on who he might want to promote or not promote, and it also allows you to provide infield tactical support, more in the realm of ideas and advice than in the realm of actual operations.

If we are going to see the DRC Military get to the point for the U.N. can work itself out of a job. I think the United States, or some other Western country like us, may need to get more involved. And the reason I say this is because there's such analogy in Washington to even putting this idea on the table.

But as a defense analyst myself, I want to say I think we are good at this now, and I actually think we can find the forces after we've drawn down so much in Iraq and Afghanistan. It wouldn't be easier for the U.S. -- easy for the U.S. Military but I actually think it's feasible.

However, I would not propose that it be something we talk about right now with President Kabila. To me it's more of a potential inducement to a Successor President, if the stars align in a number of ways on that front.

Thank you all for coming out. And please join in thanking our panelists.

(Applause)



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