

Policy Forum on Transitional Justice and Dealing with the Past in South Kivu, DRC

On 21 November 2018, Impunity Watch organised, in partnership with the Congolese Coalition for Transitional Justice (CCJT) and the Congolese Youth Associations Network (RACOJ), a Policy Forum among politico-administrative, and judicial authorities, as well as political actors from the province of South Kivu in Bukavu. The



objectives of the Forum were to present Impunity Watch's research findings and recommendations emanating from the population concerning transitional justice (JT) in the DRC. The Forum was also an occasion to discuss the role that political actors can play in the creation, the promotion and the implementation of mechanisms and appropriate initiatives for dealing with the past.

The Provincial Government was represented by a delegate from the Cabinet of the Governor and a delegate from the Provincial Ministry of Planning. The Provincial Assembly (Provincial Parliament) was represented by a Provincial Deputy, assuming the office of Quaestor in the Office of the Provincial Assembly. She was accompanied by three other officials of the Provincial Assembly. The judiciary was represented by two Magistrates / Attorneys General of the Public Prosecutor's Office at the Court of Appeal and the High Level Prosecution at the High Court, respectively. The National Police was represented by a senior officer in charge of the fight against economic and financial crime, at the same time assuming the role of liaison officer of INTERPOL in the province of South Kivu. The Mayor of Bukavu was represented by the Administrative and Legal Advisor of the Mayor of the City. Opposition political parties were also represented at the Forum. Among the participants it was noted the presence of at least two candidates in the legislative elections scheduled for December 23, 2018.



The majority of participants to the Forum, including one of the judges present, affirmed the necessity of sensitising the population to choose their leaders of the country in the next elections so that they can effectively fight against impunity and to properly care for the victims. It is thus a contribution to the electoral awareness of the population, taking into account the necessity of dealing with the past, which the majority of the participants committed to work towards. They were convinced that when the population is active, the authorities will respond to their expectations. From the same perspective, the judges present at the Forum, while claiming the apolitical nature of justice, suggested that civil society and other actors should sensitise the population to elect authorities who will have the will to facilitate the implementation of processes for dealing with the past. In addition, some participants supported the idea that civil society should undertake unofficial investigations, with well-trained investigators, as a complement to state initiatives or as a substitute for missing or failed national initiatives, in order to move forward the agenda for truth-seeking about crimes of the past in the country.

The report on "Local Initiatives and People's Expectations" (June 2018) is available [in French](#).

The report on "Transitional Justice in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Progress, Obstacles ... and Opportunities?" (March 2017) is available [in French](#).
