



High Stakes in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Thursday, June 2, 2011
9:30-11:30 am

United States Institute of Peace
2301 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20037

Forum Details:

2011 is a year of high stakes in the DRC. MONUSCO is due for renewal by the end of June and elections are due to be held before the end of the year. Meanwhile, a new report has documented sexual violence in the DRC is occurring at much higher rates than previously reported and is less concentrated in the Kivus and other conflict affected areas. With human security at such low levels and elections preparations so far behind, recent reports state that the Congo could face renewed political crisis. What are the underlying reasons for these problems and how should the United States and the international community respond to such high stakes in the DRC?

Speakers:

Joshua Marks

Central Africa Program Officer, National Endowment for Democracy

Tia Palermo

Assistant Professor, Stony Brook University

Moderator:

Laura Seay

Professor, Morehouse University and Blogger, [TexasinAfrica](#)

Speaker Bios:

Joshua Marks

Joshua Marks is the Central Africa Program Officer at the National Endowment for Democracy (Washington, DC), where he is responsible for democracy and governance programs in seven countries. His most recent trips have included assessment missions in Rwanda, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Previously a consultant for Oxfam and Small Arms Survey in the Great Lakes Region, Josh has worked on security and human rights issues in eastern DRC, where he lived in 2004-05. He has also worked with a local NGO in DRC, the U.S. Department of Defense, and was a faculty associate at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (Washington, DC). He has published articles or reports in African Security Review and Small Arms Survey, among others. A graduate of Yale University and Johns Hopkins University-SAIS, Josh speaks French, Swahili, and some Portuguese.

Tia Palermo

Tia Palermo is a co-author of the report "Estimates and determinants of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo," published May 2011. She is an Assistant Professor in the Graduate Program in Public Health, Department of Preventive Medicine at the State University of New York (SUNY), Stony Brook. She holds a Ph.D. in Public Policy and an M.S. in Health Economics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel

Hill. Her research interests include gender-based violence, gender equity, maternal and child health, and social policy, and she has studied these topics in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. She was previously a Postdoctoral Fellow at the CUNY Institute for Demographic Research (CIDR) and a Research and Evaluation Associate at Ipas. Tia has also worked and consulted for other NGOs and international organizations, including UNICEF-ESARO, Population Council, and Family Care International.

Moderator Bio:

Laura Seay

Laura Seay is an assistant professor of political science at Morehouse College. Her research addresses community responses to state fragility in central and eastern Africa. Professor Seay has conducted extensive fieldwork in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and is currently writing a book on the differences in the ways that civil society organizations respond to the state's absence in social service provision. Professor Seay earned a PhD in Government from the University of Texas at Austin, an M.A. in African Studies from Yale University, and a B.A. in International Studies cum laude from Baylor University. She also blogs about African politics at Texas in Africa and is a contributor to the Christian Science Monitor's Africa Monitor blog.

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