

Forum: United Nations Membership Council (UNMC)

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TOPIC 1: On the Membership Of Katanga

[Link to the specific LibGuide for the topic](#)

I. Introduction to the Topic

Katanga is a region located in the southeast part of Democratic Republic of Congo. The region of Katanga borders Lake Tanganyika, Zambia and Angola. When Democratic Republic of Congo was called Zaire from 1971 to 1997, Katanga was called Shaba. Shaba is from the Swahili word for copper and this was because Katanga yielded the most copper in DRC. Other resources Katanga yields the most includes but not limited to: cobalt, zinc, uranium, gold, coal, germanium, tin, manganese and silver. In 1885, Katanga was under Belgian colonial rule until 1908 when the Belgian state took over. Katanga gained independence in 1960 and created a battle between Congolese, Belgian and the United Nations forces. Its independence was short because in 1963 the state of Katanga was dissolved by the United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC) forces. In the topic of “On the membership of Katanga”, Katanga is attempting to regain their status between 1960-1963. Katanga will no longer be a region of the Democratic Republic of Congo and instead be a separate nation and part of the UN member states if the resolution is passed. When connecting to the theme of the March conference, Katanga’s independence would cause “societal changes” in “multilateral diplomacy” especially when looking into Katanga’s relationship with other nations like Democratic Republic of Congo.

II. Definition of Key Terms & Concepts

Independence: Independence is the state where a country is governing themselves without any foreign control. This is significant because Katanga has gained independence before but it is currently not at that state and the entire topic is about whether or not Katanga deserves to be in the independent condition.

Region: Region is a separation in geographical location to create areas and division. Regions have certain characteristics but not defined boundaries. This is significant because Katanga is currently a region controlled by the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Copperbelt: Copperbelt is a region in Central Africa primarily known for copper mining. This is significant to the topic because the Copperbelt region takes up some parts of Zambia and the southeastern part of Democratic Republic of Congo. This means that Katanga has access to Copperbelt and consequently also has access to Copper mining.

Secession: Secession is the act of withdrawing from a membership of a federation. This is directly related to the topic of Katanga's secession of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Child labor: Child labor is when minors are working and deprived of their childhood. This is related to one of the key issues in this topic as Katanga has children working in the mining industry.

III. Key Stakeholders

Democratic Republic of Congo: Democratic Republic of Congo is the second largest country in Africa and borders nine countries: Angola, Zambia, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Burundi and South Sudan. The UN's largest peacekeeping mission is in the Democratic Republic of Congo with more than 21,000 soldiers from approximately 50 countries. It is a key stakeholder because Katanga is a province within the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Moise Tshombe: Moise Tshombe was the leader of the State of Katanga in 1960. He was the one who was able to succeed in the secession movement of Katanga from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Tshombe used Belgian forces to initiate this movement and was able to maintain the independence for 3 years from 1960 to 1963.

Belgium: Belgium is a key stakeholder in the topic because they colonized the Democratic Republic of Congo from 1908 to 1960. The country was called the "Belgian Congo" then. Before 1908, Belgian colonial rule governed the Congo from 1885 to 1908. Congo gained its independence in 1960. Belgium also supported Moise Tshombe's secession movement of Katanga because of the resources stored in the geographical location.

United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC) forces: The United Nations Operation in the Congo was a UN peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo between July 1960 and June 1964. The ONUC forces contained 20,000 officers to help support the Congolese government from the military intervention by the Belgian military.

IV. Key Issues including Background Information

Child labor: A lot of children are employed in the mining industry of the Katanga region. Especially in the Copperbelt area. Child labor is extremely prevalent in the mining industry as it is present in 150 mining communities just within Katanga. A report showed that 1575 children were employed in the industry and the reason they were employed was because of poverty.

Resource endowment: Katanga has an abundant amount of resources lying in its land. This makes the geographical location highly preferable and valuable for a region. The resource value of the land is very high which could help Katanga gain its membership more easily. But this could also be a key issue as extremely high inflation would be undesirable for the citizens and would make the income inequality worse in the Democratic Republic of Congo. More conflicts could also arise due to the resources being in the copperbelt area which also takes over Zambia.

Conflict in the DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo has had conflicts going on within the country for a very long time. Since 1996, the conflict in DRC has resulted in approximately 6 million deaths. The first Congo war began after the Rwandan genocide in 1996 and ended in 1997. Currently, there is more violence occurring within the country because of the 2023 election. This is particularly relevant to the

topic because most of the violence is occurring in east DRC which means Katanga is also included. Also, the conflicts could directly affect the possibility of Katanga being a member state.

V. Timeline of Resolutions, Treaties, and Events

Date	Description of event
1885	Democratic Republic of Congo was called “Congo free state” from 1885 to 1908. This land was privately owned by King Leopold II and it was an absolute monarchy.
1908	In 1908, “Belgian Congo” was created by the colonization of the DRC by Belgium. The Belgian state took over and made the country into their colony instead of being owned by King Leopold.
1960	Democratic Republic of Congo gained its independence from Belgium in 1960. Conflicts were still occurring between Belgian military forces, United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC) forces and the Congolese military.
1960	While the ONUC forces were supporting Democratic Republic of Congo’s battle with the Belgian forces, Moise Tshombe created a secession movement of the Katanga region with the help of the Belgian military. Katanga was a state for only 3 years.
21 January 1963	The state of Katanga was dissolved on 21 January 1963. It was dissolved by the ONUC forces and was made to be reintegrated into the Democratic Republic of Congo as the Katanga province. Moise Tshombe, the president of the state of Katanga at the time, surrendered to the forces and let UN officials into Kolwezi.
3 June 1964	The United Nations Operation in the Congo (ONUC) forces completely withdrew from the peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo on 30 June 1964.
1994	The Rwandan genocide happened in 1994 and was when the ethnic Hutu extremists murdered approximately one million ethnic Tutsis and other Hutus in Rwanda. Rwanda is directly bordering the Democratic Republic of Congo so refugees from Rwanda crossed the border and settled in certain provinces.
1996-1997	First congo war began after the Rwandan genocide happened in 1994. The war lasted a year but became a start for the many conflicts that came to the Congo. Rwanda and Uganda came into the east part of DRC to find the remaining perpetrators of the genocide.

18 November 2014	Violence in the South-Eastern Province has forced 400,000 people to flee their homes since 2012, 71,000 in 3 months, due to violence from “triangle of death”
2022~2023	DRC, specifically the region of Katanga continues experiencing serious tension from conflict between DRC and Rwanda. Human rights violations including mass killings under armed conflict, inter-communal violence, as well as ill-treatment of detainees are deepened. This also connects to the humanitarian crisis and violates citizens’ right to education.

VI. Possible Challenges & Solutions

Child labor: A possible solution to the problem of child labor in the copperbelt area could be considered when thinking about the significance in cobalt and copper mining policies. The policies make sure to regulate proper employment and equal opportunities for all workers including children. Also, the children are employed because of poverty so a possible way to look at this key issue is through the different ways to mitigate poverty.

Resource endowment: A possible challenge in discussing the resource endowment from the copperbelt area is the ambiguity of the allocation of resources. Because the copperbelt area takes over Zambia’s land as well, Zambia could attempt to claim the minerals that are mined. Another challenge in the resources could be the way the resources are mined. The valuable resources are mostly minerals and as previously mentioned, child labor is used to receive these resources. All of these factors should be considered when different nations discuss Katanga’s membership.

Conflict in the DRC: The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo will be a serious issue that Katanga would have to deal with during their application of membership. This is because if a conflict is going on within or near the region, other member states would challenge Katanga’s security and safety for the citizens. A possible solution to this would be for Katanga to come to a consensus with the DRC to make sure that the conflict is regulated and properly dealt with.

VII. Recommendations for Resolution Writing including Research

For the Katanga delegate, the delegate should utilize and emphasize the benefits of making Katanga a member state. This could be particularly connected to the resources that Katanga has access to and use that information to create formal, positive and transactional relationships with other countries. Also, the Katangan delegate should look into how to mitigate the reason why some countries object to the membership. For instance, the Democratic Republic of Congo would not want to let go of Katanga as a part of their state because it holds so much value. Other delegates should first research what the country thinks about Katanga as a region and the perspective on whether it should gain membership. This perspective might not always be clear in the research so delegates should attempt to look into countries in similar situations and/or geographic locations to formulate an opinion about the membership.

VIII. Bibliography

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IX: Additional Resources .



