



FREE CONGO

SOLIDARITY

TOOLKIT

— 2025 —

*The Congo must lead the way.
The Globe must be in solidarity.*

SOLIDARITY

Dear Organizer,

Thank you for joining us and downloading the **Free Congo Toolkit**! We're excited to provide you with this resource to help empower individuals, organizations, and communities in the fight for justice, peace, and freedom for the Congo.

The Democratic Republic of Congo faces many serious challenges, such as resource exploitation, violent conflict, political instability, and the oppression of its people. We believe that raising awareness, providing education, and building a global network of support are essential steps in transforming the future of the Congo. This toolkit has been created to give you the resources, tools, and action steps needed to make a difference, based on principles of justice, self-determination, and healing.

The **Free Congo Toolkit** includes:

- **Political Education Resources:** Articles, films, and videos that explain the history and current issues in the DR Congo.
- **Templates and Tools:** Materials to help you organize events, protests, and campaigns, such as flyers, donation links, and templates for writing to elected officials.
- **Fundraising Tools:** Resources to help you create and manage fundraising campaigns that support Congo-related causes.
- **Stay Updated:** Ways to stay informed about the latest news, updates, and opportunities to get involved.

We hope this toolkit helps you take action and connects you with others who are passionate about social justice and creating a better future for the Congo.

Thank you again for your dedication to this cause. Your involvement and advocacy are essential to making a real difference. We look forward to working together to build this movement. For more information or to access the toolkit, please visit FreeCongo.org or feel free to reach out to us directly.

Warm regards,

FOTC Team



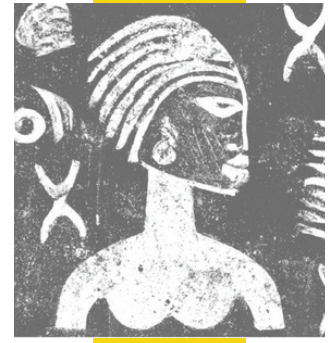
FREE CONGO



The colonialists care nothing for Africa for her own sake. They are attracted by African riches and their actions are guided by the desire to preserve their interests in Africa against the wishes of the African people. For the colonialists all means are good if they help them to possess these riches.

LUMUMBA

Why Congo Matters and the Challenges We Face:



The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) sits at the forefront of the climate emergency and the green energy transition. With an estimated 70% of the world's cobalt production—a mineral indispensable to rechargeable batteries that power green energy technologies—the DRC holds a pivotal role in our global future. Despite the country's estimated \$24 trillion in natural wealth, over two-thirds of the population lives in extreme poverty, creating dangerous and vulnerable situations for its inhabitants. A significant portion of cobalt is mined by artisanal miners, including children, who use rudimentary tools and sometimes crawl down 100-foot-deep holes to retrieve the mineral. Both children and adults face life-threatening risks, and these mining sites, often unregulated, pose severe health threats to surrounding communities, who often face deadly repercussions for speaking out.



The Congo Basin, spanning more than six countries, sequesters more carbon than all other tropical rainforests combined and is home to the world's largest tropical peatlands. These peatlands, threatened by extractive industries, are referred to as a “carbon bomb” that could release the equivalent of 20 years of U.S. fossil fuel emissions if disturbed. The Congo Basin's Indigenous peoples and local communities are vital for preserving and protecting this rainforest for the benefit of humanity. However, less than 2% of climate funding supports Indigenous and local communities in the region. As Indigenous and rural people, we face significant threats, and our ancestral lands—often labeled as “conservation” areas—are often made inaccessible to us. We experience intense discrimination, marginalization, and violence. While some of us are being invited to participate in national and global discussions, there is a critical need to increase our participation and influence. Our traditional knowledge must be valued as an essential contribution to addressing the climate crisis.

Communities across the region have been courageously organizing to protect our families and environment. However, our efforts are hindered by dilapidated and virtually non-existent infrastructure, including road, rail, and air transport. This lack of connectivity means we are often unaware of each other's efforts. The lack of connection and coordination among grassroots groups is due to very poor infrastructure, the high cost of fuel for transportation, lack of electricity, limited Internet access, and the absence of trusted communication networks.

Beyond the need for better coordination, one critical demand that has been identified is the importance of understanding the language used in global climate discourse. Terms like carbon credit, REDD+, nature-based solutions, net zero, and carbon markets carry significant political, financial, and practical implications, yet they are rarely understood at the grassroots level. Moreover, they often work to the detriment of the local and Indigenous communities.



Basandja's Proposed Solution

We believe that the health of our people, land, water, biodiversity, and the future of the world will greatly benefit from a strong Basandja Coalition of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. 'Basandja' is a Topoke word for the traditional code of conduct governing environmental stewardship that maintains a balance between human beings and all entities. Established as a coalition in 2022, we are comprised of organizations that have been working for social and environmental justice for decades. We aim to build collective power, protect our ecosystems, and enjoy dignified livelihoods. We are forest and river communities across the Congo Basin, communities living around mines, and also in the midst of the conflict in the east of the DRC. Although many funders may not yet be aware of us, we have been advocating for social and climate justice long before these terms were widely recognized.

Currently, our Coalition operates in **10%** of the DRC's 145 territories, impacting an estimated **2 million people**.

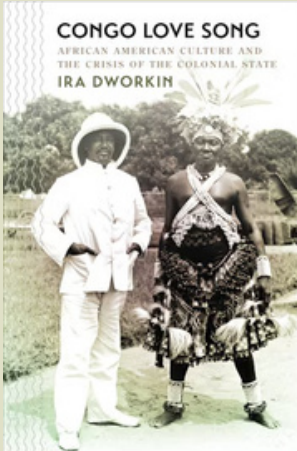


READ THE STORIES



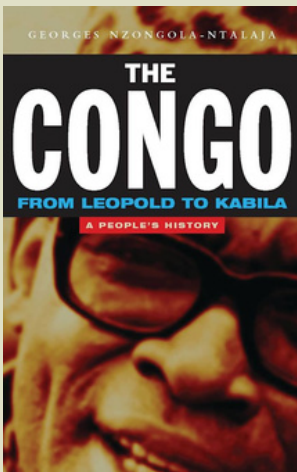
EDUCATE

READ THE STORIES



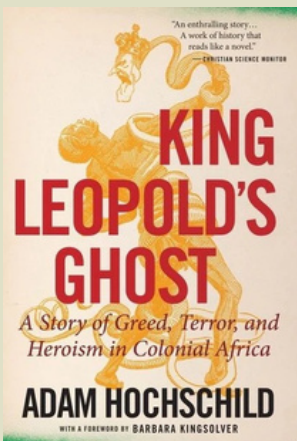
Congo Love Song: African American Culture and the Crisis of the Colonial State by Ira Dworkin

Explores how African American intellectuals, artists, and activists engaged with Congo's colonial struggle, linking Black internationalism to anti-colonial resistance.



The Congo: From Leopold to Kabila: A People's History by Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja

A sweeping Marxist history of Congo from brutal colonization to post-independence turmoil, emphasizing grassroots struggles against exploitation.

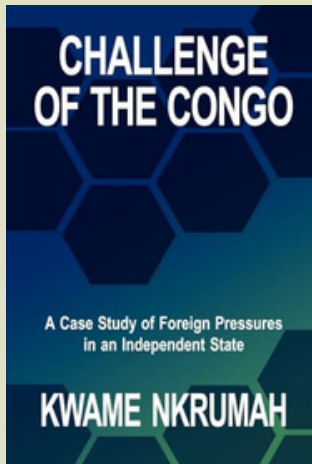


King Leopold's Ghost by Adam Hochschild

Exposes the horrific atrocities of Belgium's King Leopold II in the Congo Free State and the global movement that challenged his rule.

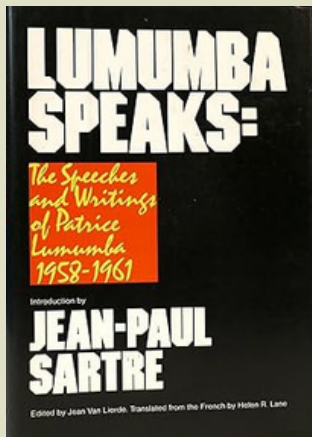
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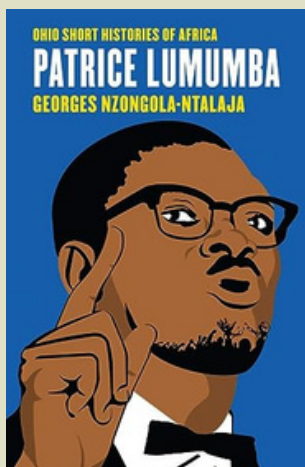
The Challenge of Congo by Kwame Nkrumah

Ghana's first president critiques neo-colonialism in Congo, framing its crises as part of Africa's broader struggle for true liberation.



Lumumba Speaks Edited by Jean Van Lierde

A collection of Patrice Lumumba's speeches and writings, revealing his revolutionary vision for Congo's independence and Pan-African solidarity.

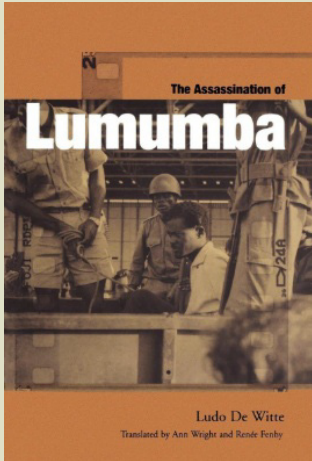


Patrice Lumumba by Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja

A political biography of Lumumba, analyzing his leadership, ideals, and assassination in the context of Cold War imperialism.

EDUCATE

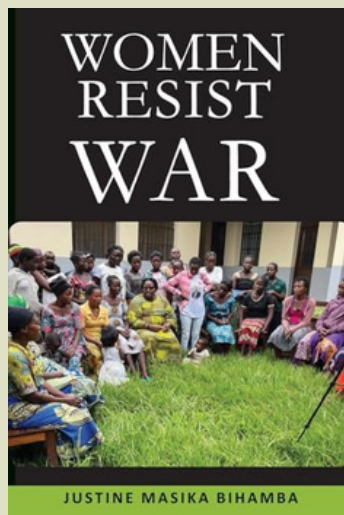
READ THE STORIES



The Assassination of Lumumba by Ludo De Witte

A damning investigation proving Belgium and the CIA's direct role in Lumumba's murder, based on declassified documents.

RECENT RELEASE



Women Resisting War by Justine Masika Bihamba

This powerful memoir and call to action tells the story of one woman's journey from survivor to leader in the heart of Congo's decades-long conflict—and the extraordinary collective of Congolese women fighting back against war, rape, and global indifference.

[BUY HERE](#)



CLICK HERE FOR FULL READING LIST!

EDUCATION

SHORT READS & ARTICLES

READ THE STORIES

The New York Review

Kagame's Hidden War in the Congo

Howard W. French

September 24, 2009 issue



Kagame's Hidden War in the Congo by Howard W. French

Exposes Rwandan President Kagame's covert war in Congo—backing rebel groups to loot minerals while masquerading as a Western ally in the region.

[Access Here](#)



The Basandja Code of Ethic

In the heart of the Congo, a community revives a traditional code of conduct for caring for the environment. Basandja is an ancestral ecological practice that centers on the mutual connection between people and the environment.

[Access Here](#)

Stolen Goods: Coltan and Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Dena Montague

The current war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has brought unspeakable devastation upon its people. With approximately 73,000 people dying monthly, the death toll is rapidly approaching four million in three years of war. The conflict has created a population so ravaged that women in some villages "have simply stopped taking their children to the health centers because they no longer possess simple items of clothing to preserve their dignity." Congolese in the eastern region of the country are faced with a lack of available hospitals and health clinics, most have been destroyed during the war, leaving at least 18.5 million people without access to health care. Preventable disease and starvation have caused the majority of deaths, overwhelmingly suffered by civilians. Women and children account for approximately 40% of war casualties. In Molia and Kalema in Katanga, 75 percent of children born during the war have died or will die before their second birthday.

The international community has distanced itself from the war in the DRC. Despite the mounting death toll, the country receives only a trickle of aid and even less media attention. Internationally, it is recognized that the war has produced a catastrophic humanitarian crisis, yet rebel movements have been able to successfully sustain their war efforts by plundering and looting the economic wealth of the country's mineral-rich eastern region. The Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF) and the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA), as well as the Congolese rebels they each support—

Dena Montague is a Research Associate for the Arms Trade Resource Project at the World Policy Institute

Stolen Goods: Coltan and Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo by Dena Montague

Exposes how Rwanda and Uganda plundered Congo's coltan to fund their occupation, linking your cell phone to a war that killed millions while corporations profited.

[Download Here](#)



WATCH THE
FOOTAGE



A woman and a young child are shown from the chest up, looking directly at the camera. The woman is wearing a striped shirt and a headscarf. The child is also looking forward. Behind them is a painting of a landscape with hills and a body of water. The top of the image has a red and yellow striped background.

CRISIS IN THE CONGO

UNCOVERING THE TRUTH

Crisis In The Congo: Uncovering The Truth

Crisis in the Congo exposes how U.S.-backed invasions by Rwanda and Uganda triggered the world's deadliest conflict since WWII, killing millions through war, sexual violence, and resource plunder. The film traces this catastrophe to 125 years of colonialism, dictatorship, and corporate exploitation, offering expert analysis rarely seen in mainstream media. Produced by Friends of the Congo, it's a call to action against the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

[WATCH HERE](#)

FRIENDS OF THE CONGO HOLDS THE RIGHTS TO THE FILM. THIS FILM CAN BE FREELY DISTRIBUTED, DUPLICATED AND SCREENED ON THE WEB, IN PUBLIC PLACES, OR AT HOME. IT CANNOT BE BROADCASTED ON TV NETWORKS.

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"BREATHTAKING!"
- Dave Karger, THE NEW YORK TIMES

SPECIAL
PRESENTATION
DUSTY DICK
FILMS

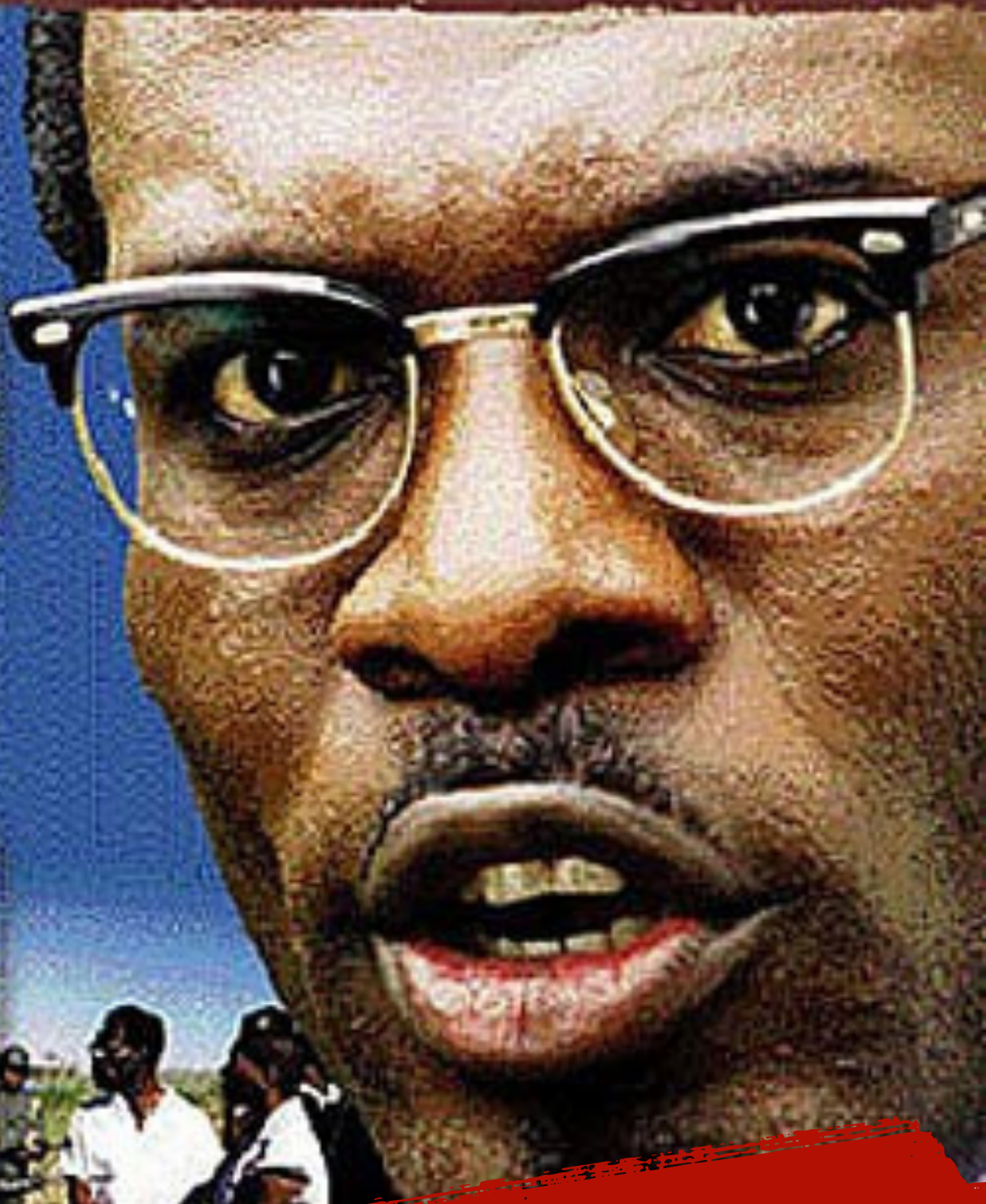
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LUMUMBA

A FILM BY RAOUL PECK

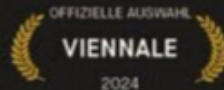
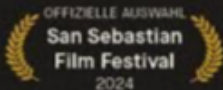
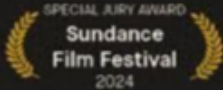
The untold story of how the West executed
Congo's democratically-elected leader for
refusing to be their puppet - a blueprint for
neocolonial interference across Africa.

[ACCESS HERE](#)

„ISN'T JUST ABOUT JAZZ, IT IS JAZZ.“

Business Doc Europe

SOUND TRACK *to a* COUP *d'* ETAT



VON DEN PRODUZENTEN VON **I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO**



Soundtrack to a Coup d'Etat

A JOHAN GRIMONPREZ FILM

Jazz and decolonization are entwined in this historical rollercoaster that rewrites the Cold War episode that led musicians Abbey Lincoln and Max Roach to crash the UN Security Council in protest against the murder of Patrice Lumumba.

[ACCESS HERE](#)

REG. ANDRÉE BLOUIN, EN LI JEAN BLOUIN

Reproduziert/innen: KATJA DRAZ

www.ONIMATOPEE.FILMS & WARBOYS.FILMS, Produktion

BASANDUA SERIES



A Film Series by Petna Ndaliko

A series of films that provide a deeper look into the environmental, economic, and political issues in the Congo:

- **Rainforest:** Examines the environmental degradation caused by industrial activities in Congo's rainforests.
- **Mining:** Explores the exploitation of the Congo's mineral resources and its impact on the people and land.
- **Conflict:** Discusses the ongoing armed conflict and its devastating effects on Congolese communities.

ACCESS HERE

EDUCATE

INSTAGRAM DIGEST

FROM @CONGOFRIENDS



Core Themes: Understanding the Challenges of the Congo & Solidarity Solutions

We are here for a Free Congo! A short video by Maurice Carney, sharing 5-6 core themes to understand the political, cultural, and economic context and key solutions for freedom.

[ACCESS HERE](#)



How To Talk About Congo

Basandja Coalition healer and founder of Yole Africa, Petna Ndaliko explains the three pillars of the Congo narrative and agro-liberation as way forward.

[ACCESS HERE](#)



5 Ways You Can Take Action for Congo

The world profits from Congo's blood: Rwanda's militia (backed by U.S./EU money) is slaughtering civilians. Don't look away—DONATE, PROTEST, BOYCOTT.

[ACCESS HERE](#)



ORGANIZE
THE PEOPLE



TOOLS

BE IN SOLIDARITY

ORGANIZE THE PEOPLE

The main request from local Congolese leaders is for allies around the globe to help build a global constituency to amplify frontline voices and solutions and support the courageous and dignified organizing taking place on the frontlines to achieve a #FreeCongo.

TOOLS	INSTRUCTIONS	ACCESS
<i>Solidarity Form</i>	1.Click 'e-Sign Here' or 'Download' 2.Complete form 3.Send & share with a friend	<u>E-SIGN HERE</u> OR DOWNLOAD
<i>Letter to Congress to Stop Funding the Conflict in the Congo</i>	1.Click 'Send Here' 2.Complete form online 3.Send & share with a friend	<u>SEND HERE</u>
Flyers & Social Media <i>(print & digital)</i>	1.Click 'Copy Template' 2.Select 'Copy' 3.Edit as needed 4.Download specific graphic	<u>COPY TEMPLATE</u>
DR Congo Primer <i>(collection of fact sheets)</i>	1.Click 'Access Here' 2.Read overview 3.Download Fact Sheets <i>(online or below)</i>	<u>ACCESS HERE</u> OR DOWNLOAD

Solidarity Commitment Card

Thank you for your care and support. Please fill out this card and leave it in the basket or text a photo of it to 925.323.7928. Contact the Coalition at basandja.org.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Solidarity Steps I Will Take with Friends of the Congo (check all that apply):

- ☐ Continue to learn about and promote the work of the Basandja Congo Basin Coalition of Indigenous Peoples & Local Communities
- ☐ Participate in local organizing efforts to raise awareness about the Congo
- ☐ Advocate online by signing petitions and/or calling my members of Congress
- ☐ Sign up to give a recurring monthly donation (no amount is too small or too large)
- ☐ Make a one-time donation: Amount \$ _____
- ☐ Ask a family member, friend, or someone in my network who has a trust or donor-advised fund to make a grant

On the back, please write any ideas, prayers, appreciations, or questions you have for the speakers.

Scan the code to donate today. Thank you!



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LEARN THE FACTS





CONGO

AN OVERVIEW OF ITS GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND POLITICS

GEOGRAPHY

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is literally and figuratively the heart of Africa. The country of an estimated 80 million people straddles the equator and is bordered by 9 other countries. It is the size of Western Europe and the fulcrum on which the African continent swings. Congo is the second largest country in Africa in area and the fourth largest in population. Congo is a young country with the majority of its population 18 years old or younger.

HISTORY & POLITICS

Congo is home to one of the oldest mathematical artifacts in the world, the Ishango Bones, a binary counting system and lunar calendar, which dates to 20,000 B.C. The pre-colonial Congo region was governed by federated states. However, since the modern founding of the Congo in 1885 when it was given to King Leopold II of Belgium at the Berlin Conference of 1884/1885 as his own personal property, Congolese have been engaged in a social justice movement to regain control of the country and determine their own affairs.

WHY CONGO MATTERS

Congo is arguably the richest country on the planet in terms of natural resources. It is the storehouse of strategic and precious minerals that are vital to the functioning of modern society. Its minerals are key to the consumer electronics, the technology, automotive, aerospace and military industries. Its diamonds, gold, copper, cobalt, uranium, timber, iron, tin, and coltan (mineral that is central to the functioning of our cell phones, laptops and other technology and electronic devices) are coveted throughout the globe.

Due to Congo's strategic location in the heart of Africa and the lust for her wealth powerful nations have repeatedly intervened in the Congo over the past 125 years. Congo is literally and figuratively the heart of Africa and the fulcrum on which the African continent swings. Former South African president Thabo Mbeki says "there is no new Africa without a new Congo."

CONGO'S POTENTIAL

In spite of the remarkable challenges faced by the Congolese people, they can be overcome, especially in light of Congo's incredible human and natural potential. Congo has the agricultural potential to feed the entire African continent. Congo also has the hydro capacity to provide electricity to all of Africa with some left over to export to Southern Europe and the Middle East. Congo is a part of the second largest rainforest in the world and is vital to the fight against climate change.

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

1692 K Street, NW Ste 300 Washington, DC 20006 | Phone: 202-584-6512 | Fax: 775-371-1064
info@friendsofthecongo.org | www.friendsofthecongo.org

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PIVOTAL MOMENTS IN CONGO'S HISTORY SINCE 1885

1884

to

1885

Berlin Conference, Congo given to King Leopold II as his own personal property.

1885

to

1908

Brutal reign of Congo Free State by Leopold II. An estimated 10 - 15 million Congolese perished under Leopold's regime of rubber and ivory extraction.

1960

Congo wins its independence from Belgium and elects its first democratic Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba.

1961

Less than 7 months in office, Patrice Lumumba was assassinated by Western Powers and Congolese elite. Belgium apologized in 2002 for their role in the assassination of Lumumba.

1965

to

1997

The United States installed and maintained Joseph Desire Mobutu in power for over thirty years in spite of a number of attempts by the Congolese people to overthrow his dictatorial regime.

1996

United States and British allies, Rwanda and Uganda led the invasion of the Congo.

1997

Mobutu is overthrown in May and Laurent Kabila is installed in power by Rwanda and Uganda.

1998

US and British backed Rwanda and Uganda invaded Congo a second time in an attempt to remove Laurent Kabila from power whom they had installed in 1997. The second invasion unleashed the death of an estimated six million Congolese, which represents the deadliest conflict in the world since World War Two.

2001

Laurent Desire Kabila was assassinated and replaced by his son Joseph Kabila.

2002

The war officially ends but the conflict continues to this day, mainly in Eastern Congo.

2006

Joseph Kabila was elected president and served until January 2019.

2019

Felix Tshisekedi, son of former opposition icon Etienne Tshisekedi replaces Joseph Kabila as president in the first peaceful transfer of power since the CIA overthrow of the democratically elected Patrice Lumumba in 1960.

2023

Felix Tshisekedi won a second five-year term in the December 2023 elections.

10 Reasons Why CONGO MATTERS

1.

Congo is central to the future of the African continent. It is the fulcrum on which the continent swings. If Congo is stable and prosperous, it will have a positive impact on the entire continent.

2.

Congo is literally and figuratively the heart of Africa. It straddles the equator, bordered by nine countries, the size of Western Europe and has an estimated population of 110 million, the majority of whom are 18 and under.

3.

Congo is a part of the second largest rainforest in the world, and is vital to the fight against climate change.

4.

Congo has the agricultural capacity to feed the entire African continent.

5.

The Congo river has the hydro-electric capacity to light up the entire African continent with power left over to export to Southern Europe and the Middle East.

6.

Congo has over 1,100 minerals and precious metals.

7.

Congo is the storehouse of precious and strategic minerals that are vital to the aerospace, military, automotive, electronics, technology and green/clean energy industries.

8.

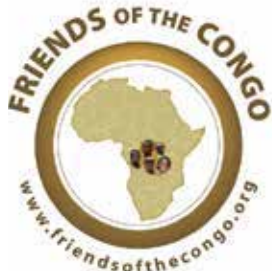
There is an estimated \$24 trillion of wealth (equivalent to the Gross Domestic Product of the United States) in Congo's soil.

9.

Congo's music is listened to throughout the continent and serves as a beltway for the transmission of Congolese culture and spirit.

10.

Most importantly, Congo has enormous human potential via its youth, women, scholars, scientists and ordinary people who have suffered unnecessarily for far too long due to plunder, assassinations, invasions and dictators imposed by the West. It is vital that people of goodwill throughout the world stand with the Congolese people as they pursue peace, justice, and human dignity.



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Basic Facts on the Congo



History & Geography

1. Congo is located in the heart of Africa straddling the equator.
2. Congo is bordered by nine other African countries and is the size of Western Europe with a population of 110 million inhabitants.
3. The lingua franca is French however four major languages (Lingala, Kikongo, Tshiluba, and Swahili) are spoken in more than 250 ethnic groups.
4. Congo's Ishango Bones, a binary counting system and lunar calendar, are among the oldest mathematical artifacts in the world, dating to 20,000 BC.
5. The Kongo empire reigned during the period of African enslavement and prior to the Colonization era.
6. Congo was given to King Leopold II of Belgium at the 1884/85 Berlin Conference.
7. King Leopold II ruled Congo as his own personal property for 23 years (1885-1908) during which time approximately 10 million Congolese perished as the King extracted rubber and ivory.
8. As a result of international grassroots pressure, King Leopold II had to relinquish ownership of the Congo to the Belgian state in 1908 and Belgium ruled as a colonial power until 1960.

Politics

1. Congo obtained its independence from Belgium on June 30, 1960 under the elected leadership of Prime Minister Patrice Emery Lumumba who was overthrown within weeks and assassinated within months (January 17, 1961) by Western powers and Congolese sycophants.
2. Pursuant to Lumumba's assassination, the United States installed and backed dictator Joseph Desire Mobutu for over three decades.
3. U.S. allies, Rwanda and Uganda invaded the Congo twice (1996 & 1998) which resulted in the removal of Mobutu in 1997 and the unleashing of the deaths of nearly six million.
4. The overthrow of Mobutu resulted in the installation of Laurent Desire Kabila in 1997, who was assassinated in 2001 and followed by his son Joseph Kabila who remained in power until January 2019.
5. Felix Tshisekedi replaced Joseph Kabila as president of the Congo in the country's first peaceful transfer of power since the overthrow of Patrice Lumumba by Western powers in 1960. Tshisekedi was reelected to a second five-year term in December 2023.

The Tragedy

1. It is estimated that nearly six million people have died as a result of conflict and conflict related causes in the Congo since 1996.
2. Half of those who perished in the conflict are children under the age of five.
3. Hundreds of thousands of women have been raped as a weapon of war.
4. Seventy percent of Congolese live in extreme poverty earning less than \$2 per day.
5. The international community is systematically looting Congo's spectacular wealth.

The Potential

1. Congo's people represent its greatest potential with a population of 110 million, half under the age of 18.
2. Congo is a storehouse of strategic minerals (cobalt, copper, zinc, gold, diamond, silver, magnesium, germanium, uranium, coltan, petroleum and many other resources), which are vital to global industries such as the military, aerospace, technology, electronics, automobile, jewelry and others.
3. Congo possesses 64 percent of the world's reserve of coltan (a mineral found in cell phones and other electronic devices).
4. Congo is the largest producer of cobalt in the world and the largest producer of copper in Africa.
5. Congo is a part of the second largest rainforest in the world, which is vital in the fight against global warming and climate change.
6. Congo has the hydro capacity to provide electricity for the entire African continent, southern Europe and parts of the Middle East.
7. Congo has the agricultural capacity to feed the entire African continent.

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Women of the Congo, their stories...

The physical and psycho-social traumatic effects of the conflict

Maman Nyota (home broken into at night by rebels)

They placed a knife at the throat of my husband and told him to have sex with me in front of them and my father-in-law. My husband refused. They took off his clothes. Then, they placed the knife at his throat again and told him it was his last chance before they kill him. He refused and finally they killed him.

Therese (captured by rebels as a sex slave)

We were accompanied by body guards for everything, even when we went to the toilet ... We had to be at the disposition of the man who raped us all day. It was always the same man. Even if I did not want to, I had to be his concubine. He always had his gun pointed at me and threatened to kill me if I resisted him. If I posed the least resistance, he would hit me.

Maman Nsimire (Raped by rebels in public as a form of humiliation)

They asked for the telephone then money, and threatened to kill us if we did not give it to them. My husband gave them \$100 that I had planned to use for a business project. Then one of the men hit me demanding that I lay down. I refused. He continued to hit me ripping off my clothes until I was subdued. While this was happening, two men held my husband. My children were present and in front of everyone, they raped me.

Surveys:

BERKELEY

66 percent

61 percent of those polled in the east said they witnessed the violent death of a family member or friend

34 percent said they themselves had been abducted for more than a week

53 percent reported being forced to work or being enslaved by armed groups

16 percent had been sexually violated and

12 percent multiple times

JOHNS HOPKINS (Snap Shot of South Kivu Province)

82 percent of rape survivors have STDs

60 percent have lost their husbands

An estimated 30 percent of rape survivors are HIV positive

Impunity throughout province – estimated 40,000 cases of rape - only 38 cases brought to prosecution

Sources for survey:

Situation Analysis: Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Development in Eastern DR Congo.

The situation analysis was conducted in the Eastern South Kivu Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) from July 20-July 29 by Dr. Nancy Glass of Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing and Center for Global Health in partnership with Great Lakes Restoration, the Archdioceses of Bukavu and Programme D'Appui aux Initiatives de Developpement Economique du Kivu (P.A.I.D.E.K).

The International Center for Transitional Justice, the Human Rights Center at the University of California, Berkeley and the Payson Center for International Development at Tulane University conducted a survey of 2,620 Congolese between September and December 2007. The study focused North and South Kivu, Ituri, Kinshasa, and Kisangani.



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COLTAN and the CONGO

Modern Uses of Coltan

- Laptop computers
- Cellular phones
- Jet engines
- Rockets
- Cutting tools
- Camera lenses
- X-ray film
- Ink jet printers
- Hearing aids
- Pacemakers
- Airbag protection systems
- Ignition and motor control modules:
GPS, ABS systems in automobiles
- Game Consoles
(i.e. XBOX, PlayStation, Nintendo, etc.)
- Video cameras
- Digital still cameras
- Prosthetic devices for humans:
hips, plates in the skull, also mesh to
repair bone removed after damage by cancer

What is Coltan?

Coltan is short for Columbite-tantalite - a black tar-like mineral found in major quantities in the Congo. The Congo possesses 64 percent of the world's reserves of coltan. When coltan is refined it becomes a resistant powder that can hold a high electric charge. The properties of refined coltan are vital elements in creating devices that store energy or capacitors, which are used in a vast array of small electronic devices, especially in mobile phones, laptop computers, pagers, and other electronic devices.



Coltan before it is processed into electronics, parts for weapon systems, tools, etc.



Foreign Corporate Exploitation

Over the past 16 years, foreign corporations have been deeply involved in the exploitation of coltan in the Congo. The coltan mined by rebels and neighboring countries (Rwanda, Uganda & Burundi) is sold to multi-national corporations. The United Nations (UN), in four studies from 2001 – 2003, implicated several companies in sourcing coltan from the Congo and say that these companies serve as “the engine of the conflict in the DRC.” Major U. S. players identified by the UN studies include: Cabot Corporation, Boston, MA; OM Group, Cleveland, Ohio; AVX, Myrtle Beach, SC; Eagle Wings Resources International, Ohio; Trinitech International, Ohio; Kemet Electronics Corporation, Greenville, SC; & Vishay Sprague, Malvern, PA.

Corporations from other countries have been a part of the coltan exploitation chain. These companies include but are not limited to Germany's HC Starc and EPCOS, China's Nigncxia, and Belgium's George Forrest International.

Once the coltan is processed and converted to capacitors, it is then sold to companies such as Nokia, Motorola, Compaq, Alcatel, Dell, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Lucent, Ericsson and Sony for use in a wide assortment of everyday products ranging from cell phones to computer chips and game consoles.

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COBALT and the CONGO

Companies Using Cobalt

- Apple
- Amperex Technology
- BMW
- Daimler
- Dell
- Fiat-Chrysler
- Ford
- Hewlett-Packard
- Huawei
- Huayou Cobalt
- Hunan Shanshan
- General Motors
- Glencore
- IBM
- LG Chem
- Microsoft
- Panasonic
- Renault
- Samsung
- Sony
- Tesla
- Toyota
- Vodafone
- Volkswagen

What is Cobalt?

Cobalt is a shiny metal that is a byproduct of the mining of nickel and copper. Its atomic symbol is Co and atomic number is 27. On the African continent, cobalt is found primarily in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Zambia. The DRC is the largest producer of cobalt in the world, producing an estimated 60% of the world's supply. It also has the largest reserves of cobalt with about 50% of the world's reserve of cobalt. Cobalt is used in two key sectors, military and industry. In the military sector it is vital for the functioning of jet engines and in the commercial industry sector it is critical for rechargeable batteries.

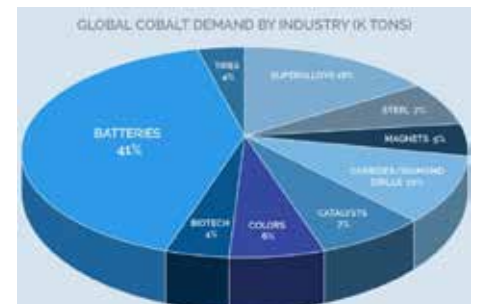


Cobalt before it is processed into electronics, parts for weapon systems, tools, etc.



Features

- Identified global terrestrial reserves of cobalt amount to an estimated 25 million tons.
- There is enough land reserves of cobalt to last 100 years.
- D.R. Congo produces more cobalt than all other countries combined.
- 49% of Cobalt demand is driven by batteries in cell phones and electric cars.
- One third of all cars in the world could be electric in 20 years.
- About 45% of the cobalt consumed in the United States was used in superalloys, mainly in aircraft gas turbine engines.
- China is the leading supplier of cobalt to the US but China gets much of its cobalt from Congo-Kinshasa.
- China is the world leading consumer of cobalt.
- Cobalt is a key mineral for the green energy revolution.
- Cobalt is vital for the batteries used for storing wind and solar energy.
- Cobalt contributes to the manufacture of more eco-friendly products.



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Minerals and Elements in the Democratic Republic of Congo

The Periodic Table of the Elements is an amazing thing. On a single, highly structured page, it summarizes the identity and properties of all of the atoms that make up Planet Earth. These are grouped into specific entities called "elements" which are typically referred to by scientists as simple, one- or two-letter chemical symbols.

Group →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Period ↓	1 1 H																	2 He
2	3 Li	4 Be											5 B	6 C	7 N	8 O	9 F	10 Ne
3	11 Na	12 Mg											13 Al	14 Si	15 P	16 S	17 Cl	18 Ar
4	19 K	20 Ca	21 Sc	22 Ti	23 V	24 Cr	25 Mn	26 Fe	27 Co	28 Ni	29 Cu	30 Zn	31 Ga	32 Ge	33 As	34 Se	35 Br	36 Kr
5	37 Rb	38 Sr	39 Y	40 Zr	41 Nb	42 Mo	43 Tc	44 Ru	45 Rh	46 Pd	47 Ag	48 Cd	49 In	50 Sn	51 Sb	52 Te	53 I	54 Xe
6	55 Cs	56 Ba	57 La	* 72 Hf	73 Ta	74 W	75 Re	76 Os	77 Ir	78 Pt	79 Au	80 Hg	81 Tl	82 Pb	83 Bi	84 Po	85 At	86 Rn
7	87 Fr	88 Ra	89 Ac	* 104 Rf	105 Db	106 Sg	107 Bh	108 Hs	109 Mt	110 Ds	111 Rg	112 Cn	113 Nh	114 Fl	115 Mc	116 Lv	117 Ts	118 Og
				* 58 Ce	59 Pr	60 Nd	61 Pm	62 Sm	63 Eu	64 Gd	65 Tb	66 Dy	67 Ho	68 Er	69 Tm	70 Yb	71 Lu	
				* 90 Th	91 Pa	92 U	93 Np	94 Pu	95 Am	96 Cm	97 Bk	98 Cf	99 Es	100 Fm	101 Md	102 No	103 Lr	

Some of these elements are well known to us:

- carbon (C)—the building blocks of humans and all life-forms on Earth,
- nitrogen (N)—the most abundant gas in the Earth's atmosphere,
- oxygen (O)—less abundant than nitrogen, but the gas in the atmosphere which fuels human life.

Just as nitrogen is more abundant in air than oxygen, so the various elements in the Periodic Table differ in their abundance in the Earth's crust — the outer skin of the planet on which we all live. Ten elements, topped by oxygen, silicon, aluminum, iron and calcium, make up 99.2% of the weight of the crust.

All of the other elements on the Periodic Table make up less than 1% of the weight of the crust.

Many of these elements have critical uses in our high-technology advanced industrial society.

But in order to be economically extracted from the crust, we need to find rocks where the concentrations of these desired elements greatly exceeds this average crustal concentration.

There are places where these rare elements are concentrated by geologic processes.

The rocks here constitute ores — rocks that can be mined and processed for a profit.

In the DRC, there are ores of the following elements: copper, cobalt, niobium, tantalum, tin, tungsten, and gold.

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Element	Ores (minerals) occurring in the DRC	Selected uses of element
Copper (Cu)	A variety of Copper sulfide minerals	Electrical wire and cable; Electric motors; Integrated circuits
Cobalt (Co)	Heterogenite, a mixed oxide and Hydroxide of Cobalt (CoOOH)	Alloys for gas turbines and jet engines; Batteries in cell phones and Electric vehicles
Niobium (Nb)	Columbite (also called niobite), an Iron, Manganese, Niobium oxide mineral [(Fe,Mn)Nb ₂ O ₆]	Alloys in jet and rocket engines; Superconducting magnets in magnetic resonance imaging equipment
Tantalum (Ta)	Tantalite, an Iron, Manganese, Tantalum oxide mineral [(Fe,Mn)Ta ₂ O ₆] Columbite-tantalite ores are typically referred to as coltan (see https://friendsofthecongo.org/coltan/)	Capacitors in cell phones and personal computers; Alloys in jet engines
Tin (Sn)	Cassiterite, a tin oxide mineral SnO ₂	Solders for electronic circuits; Alloys with zirconium for cladding of nuclear fuel rods
Tungsten (W)	Wolframite an iron, manganese tungstate mineral (Fe,Mn)WO ₄	Tungsten carbide for cutting tools; Alloys for use in armor- piercing ammunition
Gold (Au)	Native metal, Au	Monetary use; Jewelry; Electrical contacts in personal computers

Much of the world's attention with respect to conflict minerals in the DRC (see full report available at <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/democratic-republic-congo/time-dig-deeper/>) has focused on tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold, often referred to as the 3TG.

In the United States, regulations are in place to protect the health and safety of miners, and to protect the air, water and soil of the mining regions. Sadly, in the DRC, such protections just don't exist. The processing of ores to extract the economically important elements exposes sulfide minerals to atmospheric oxygen, and thereby generates sulfuric acid. This acid mine drainage can mobilize toxic metals and threaten surface and ground water resources.

Tailings from these large-scale copper-cobalt operations can be found in streambeds where they act as continuing sources of toxic metals to water supplies. Besides large-scale commercial mining operations, there are thousands of artisanal miners—small-scale, subsistence miners—who are exposed to the danger of tunnel and pit collapses, toxic dusts, and radiation exposure associated with the presence of uranium and thorium in some of these ores.

This has been a glimpse of the science that underlies some of the suffering of the people of the DRC. As end users of many of the high technology products that had their supply-chain origin in the DRC, it is up to all of us to work for the responsible sourcing of raw materials from the DRC.

* Produced by professor Edward R. Landa

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MOBILIZE THE RESOURCES



FUNDRAISING

MOBILIZE THE RESOURCES

Send a Fundraising Letter

***Amplify or Launch an
Instagram Fundraiser***

***Amplify or Launch a
GoFundMe Fundraiser***

FUNDRAISING

Subject: Support the Fight for a Free and Just Congo
Dear [Recipient's Name],

MOBILIZE THE RESOURCES

I hope this message finds you well. Today, I am reaching out to ask for your support in a cause that has urgent relevance: the fight for justice, peace, and self-determination for the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The Friends of the Congo (FOTC) has been a tireless advocate for Congo's people since its founding in 2004. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, FOTC works in partnership with Congolese communities to bring about lasting change in one of the most resource-rich yet war-torn countries in the world. Based in Washington, DC, FOTC has played a critical role in advocating for policies that address the long-standing issues of exploitation, human rights abuses, and foreign intervention that have plagued the Congo.

Why Now?

The situation in the Congo remains dire. From the ongoing exploitation of its people and resources to the humanitarian crisis created by unending conflict, Congo continues to face incredible challenges. But in the face of these struggles, there is hope—through your generosity, we can support the organizations and communities fighting for freedom, justice, and peace.

What We Do

FOTC's efforts are dedicated to advocating for policies that end foreign interference, support Congolese sovereignty, and provide resources for long-term peace-building. By supporting this work, you help us amplify the voices of the Congolese people, raise awareness about the ongoing crisis, and demand action from world leaders.

How You Can Help

We need your support to continue this important work. Your contribution will directly support FOTC's programs, advocacy efforts, and community engagement initiatives. The need is urgent, and your donation, no matter the size, makes a tangible difference. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation today: **Donate Now**

Here's how your gift can help:

- \$50 helps fund educational materials for advocacy campaigns.
- \$100 supports the rescuing of children from cobalt mines in the South of the Congo.
- \$250 provides critical support for organizing community-based peacebuilding initiatives.
- \$500 or more funds Indigenous forest defenders to protect and preserve the Congo basin rainforesting struggles.

We also encourage you to share this call for support with your network—together, we can make a bigger impact.

FOTC was founded with the mission to stand in solidarity with the Congolese people, advocating for the realization of their full rights and potential. With a deep commitment to peace and justice, FOTC continues to partner with local organizations in the Congo to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are met.

Your support is not just a donation—it's a powerful statement of solidarity with the Congolese people who continue to fight for the freedom and dignity they deserve.

Thank you for your continued support and for standing with the people of Congo in this pivotal moment.

With gratitude,



**Copy this
fundraising
letter**

Launch an Instagram Fundraising Campaign for Friends of the Congo

QUICK START

1. **Go to your IG profile** → Tap the "+" (**Create**) button → Select "**Fundraiser**".
2. **Search for "Friends of the Congo"** and select as nonprofit.
3. **Set a goal & deadline**, add a compelling description (you can borrow language from the fundraising letter!)
4. **Share the fundraiser** to your Stories/Feed to maximize visibility.



Define Your Campaign Goal and Message

Set a clear goal; craft a compelling message



Create a Visual Campaign

Design eye-catching graphics using a graphic design tool



Set Up a Fundraising Link

Use Instagram's donation sticker or link to a fundraising platform



Post Engaging Content

Share regular updates, videos, and graphics to encourage donations



Use Hashtags & Tagging

Use relevant hashtags and tag Friends of the Congo (@congofriends)



Engage with Your Audience

Respond to comments and ask followers to share



Create an Instagram Fundraising Challenge

Encourage followers to donate and tag their friends

NEED HELP?

[Help Guide for Starting a Fundraiser](#)

[Help Guide for Starting a Group Fundraiser](#)

Starter Language

🔊 **BREAKING THE SILENCE FOR CONGO** 🔊

The Congo is the heart of Africa—rich in land, culture, and resources. Yet for decades, its people have suffered exploitation, violence, and erasure while the world looks away. But we won't. I'm launching this fundraiser for @CongoFriends because their work is **CRUCIAL** to:

- ◆ Supporting Congolese activists demanding justice
- ◆ Ending the plunder of Congo's minerals (yes, the ones in your phone)
- ◆ Amplifying voices the world tries to silence

Goal: [Your \$ Goal] by [Deadline]

👉 Swipe up or tap the link in my bio to donate.

👉 Share this post—awareness is power.
#CongolsNotForSale | #FreeCongo |
#StandWithCongo

Launch a GoFundMe for Friends of the Congo



**‘Donate now’ and
‘Share’ the URGENT
Call for Support for
Goma, DR Congo**



1. Create Your Fundraiser

- Visit GoFundMe.com → Click "Start a GoFundMe"
- Choose category: **"Nonprofit"** or **"Justice & Legal"**
 - **Title:** "Support Free Congo: Fund Justice with Friends of the Congo"
 - **Goal:** Start with \$1,000+ (adjust as needed)
 - **Beneficiary:** Select FOTC or note funds will go to their official donation page

2. Write Your Story (Copy/Paste Ready)

"The Congo fuels our phones, cars, and tech—yet its people face violence and exploitation. Friends of the Congo (FOTC) has fought for 20+ years to change this. **Your donation supports:** ✓ Grassroots activism ✓ Resourcing the people ✓ Global awareness Every dollar helps break the cycle of oppression. #CongolsNotForSale"

3. Add Visual Impact

- Cover photo: Use FOTC's logo, a powerful Congo protest image, or edit pre-made graphic in 'Tools'
- Video (optional): Record a 15-second clip: "I'm fundraising because Congo matters. Join me!"

4. Share Strategically

- First post: Tag @CongoFriends + use hashtags:
- #FreeCongo #TechJustice #CongoRising
- Email/text: Send personal asks to 10 close contacts first
- Updates: Post every 3 days ("We're at 60%—help us cross the line!")

5. Donate & Show Proof

- Withdraw funds → Send 100% to FOTC via:
[DONATE HERE](#)
- Post a screenshot with donors: "\$1,200 sent to FOTC —THANK YOU!"

3 Pro Tips for More Donations

- 🔥 **Match Challenge:** "I'll match the next \$200 in donations!"
- 🔥 **Tag Influencers:** Ask 3 friends with big followings to share
- 🔥 **Use Stories:** Post donation receipts to build trust

STAY UPDATED

JOIN THE MOVEMENT



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