



eurAC

european network
for central africa

Annual Report 2020

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Editorial – What a year!



Camille Liewig
President of EurAc

In 2020, the world faced an unexpected global challenge. Times have been difficult, but the pandemic has shown us how linked and interdependent our societies are. The terrible social and economic consequences of the health crisis have highlighted the vulnerability of our systems and the fragility of our democratic achievements.

As we collaborate with our partners in Central Africa in their efforts for democratisation, we must keep in mind that we should keep shaping our ideals of democracy, equality, and respect for human dignity in Europe. We have a lot to learn from each other: building democracy is a day-to-day effort.

2020 has been marked by many important political changes in the Great Lakes region. With two new presidents in charge, the tide is turning. Yet the challenges remain numerous, and political will only is not enough given the extent and complexity of the task, and the heavy legacy of the predecessors. EurAc has continued its advocacy work to promote human rights and good governance; the European Union and its partners should not be afraid to take strong action to support local civil society in building peace and rule of law.

At institutional level, this year has been rich and fruitful for EurAc. We achieved the objective of shaping an ambitious strategy for the next few years, with new policies and internal organisation, to increase the impact of our advocacy work. The Board would like to thank the members for their commitment in this important work. Special thanks also to the Secretariat which, despite the sanitary situation and the workload, has held with strength the network and ensured the elaboration of the new strategy.

We have thus started 2021 with a new director and an ambitious strategy for the future. I am convinced that this year will be better and will bring about many successes in our advocacy for human rights, democracy, peace and the sustainable management of natural resources in the Great Lakes region! ■

About EurAc

The European Network for Central Africa (EurAc), created in 2003, aims to help the Great Lakes region build a better future. EurAc carries out advocacy work for a strong, coherent and sustainable engagement by the European Union and its Member States integrated to a regional approach.

Secretariat



Clara Debeve
Director



Teodora Nguen
Advocacy Officer



Daniela Bishop
Communications
Officer



Amal Hamich
Executive Assistant

Until 2020

- **Brune Mercier**
Former Director
(2017 - 2020)

- **Giuseppe Cioffo**
Former Programmes &
Policy Officer
(2017 - 2020)

Board

- **Camille Liewig**
Secours Catholique -
Caritas France
- **Véronique Paternostre**
CNCD-11.11.11.
- **Lore Bertrem**
11.11.11.
- **Maxence Peniguet**
Free Press Unlimited
- **Mickaël Repellin**
Franciscans International
- **Samuel Pommeret**
CCFD-Terre Solidaire

Objectives

EurAc as an advocacy network aims for the EU and its Member States to develop and implement strong and coherent policies regarding peace, security, inclusive political participation, the sustainable and equitable management of natural resources, and the full respect of human rights in the Great Lakes region.

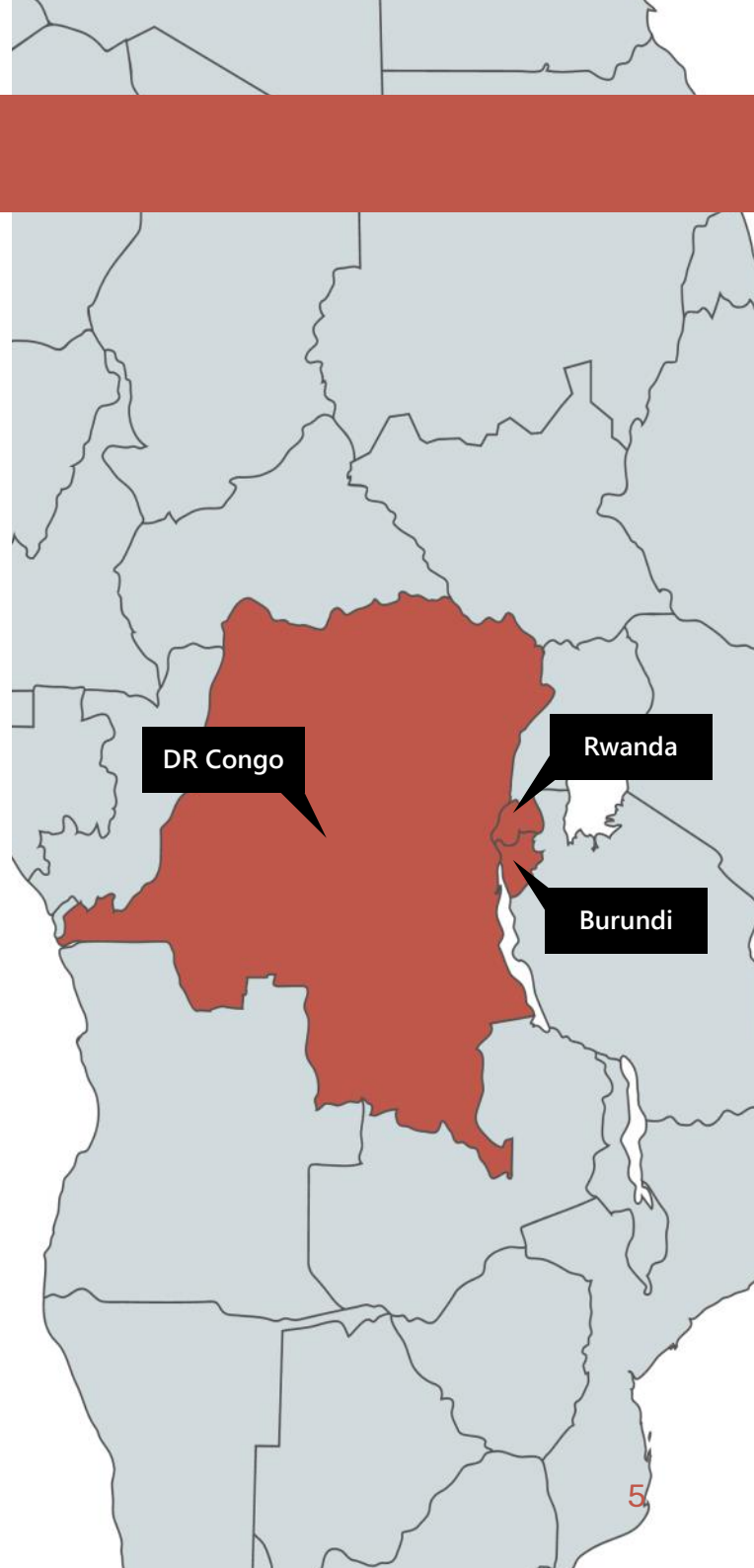
Peace &
Security



Democracy &
Human Rights



Natural
Resources



Member organisations

action 
damien

CNCD
11.11.11

11.11.11
VECHT MEE TEGEN ONRECHT

 **AGIR ENSEMBLE**
POUR LES DROITS HUMAINS


mensen
met een
missie


Onlus
a.m.i.
Ass. Marengolo-Italia


ALBOAN
ONG promovida por los jesuitas


SOS
FAIM


Broederlijk Delen
TOT IEDEREEN MEE IS

 **PMU**

PAX

Cordaid 

 **LLIGA DELS DRETS
DELS POBLES**

 **Justice & Démocratie**

 **forum réfugiés**
www.forumrefugies.org  **Cosi**
Dipartimento di Scienze della Salute

 **MÉDECINS
DU MONDE**

 **memisa**
together for health

 **ENTRAIDE &
FRATERNITE**

 **diakonia**
MÄNNISKOR SOM FÖRÄNDRAR VÄRLDEN

 **CCFD** **TERRE
SOLIDAIRE**
Soyons les forces du changement

Trócaire

 **FREE
PRESS
UNLIMITED**

 **ökume
nisches
Netz
Zentral
afrika**

 **PAX
CHRISTI
INTERNATIONAL**

 **FASTENOPFER
ACTION DE CARÊME
SACRIFICIO QUARESIMALE**

 **IPIS**

 **SOLSOC**

 **Franciscans International**
A voice at the United Nations

 **KIRKENS NØDHJELP**
actalliance

 **christian
aid**

 **Secours
Catholique**
Caritas France

 **PROTECTION
international**

 **Justice
& Paix**

 **HEKS
EPER**

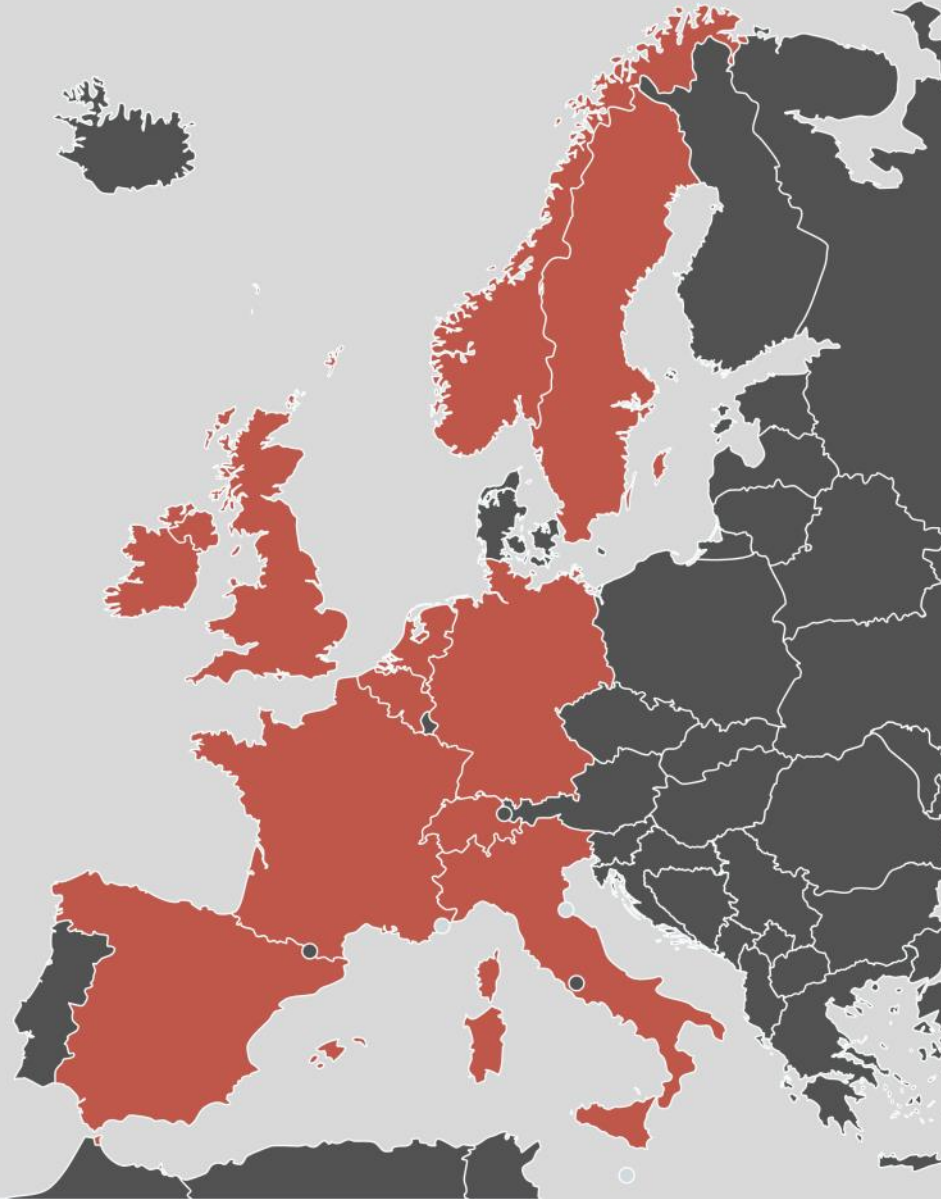
 **SAPI**
INTERNATIONAL
SAVE THE PEOPLE

 **LOUVAIN
COOPERATION**
UNIVERSITAIRE & SOLIDAIRE

Countries of origin

- Belgium (13)
- France (4)
- Germany (1)
- Ireland (1)
- Italy (1)
- The Netherlands (4)
- Norway (1)
- Spain (2)
- Sweden (2)
- Switzerland (4)
- UK (1)
- International (2)

EurAc members are European civil society organisations that work on and in the Great Lakes region and that support local civil society in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda in promoting peace and development, as well as in defending human rights.



A glimpse of our activities in 2020

In order to reach its advocacy goals, EurAc positions itself as a strong, legitimate, coordinated, well-known and recognised network.

EurAc produces well-documented and fact-based analysis and disseminates its recommendations strategically. In total, EurAc drafted **3** policy reports, **4** policy briefs and **1** statement that were publicly or confidentially disseminated in 2020.

EurAc also develops and maintains strong relations with a variety of European policy and decision makers. In 2020, EurAc met with **17** decision makers and organised **10** advocacy meetings.

EurAc and its members also actively collaborate on common activities and initiatives, such as the online events that are presented in this annual report.

EurAc has also been involved in coordination mechanisms with other NGOs and networks. As such, EurAc participated in many informal meetings with partners, and organised expert meetings to monitor the situation in the Great Lakes region.

Finally, EurAc is in continuous contact with civil society organisations from the region. No mission was organised in 2020 but EurAc has been able to organise online meetings none the less.

The next few pages provide an overview of our activities in 2020.



Picture © Frederic Triest



COVID-19 in the Great Lakes region

The COVID-19 response should leave no one behind: the pandemic's implications in the Great Lakes region

2020 was marked by the crisis linked to COVID-19. EurAc published a cross-cutting policy report to highlight the specific challenges linked to the coronavirus in the DR Congo, Rwanda and Burundi.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the response to it undeniably present an era-defining challenge to public health and global economy. In the Great Lakes region, the global health challenge intersects with an already dire sanitary and public health situation, weak institutions, a poorly diversified economy as well as communal and inter-regional tensions.

As the European Union (EU) had already outlined the long-awaited new EU-Africa strategy (March 2020), EurAc has suggested courses of action to be taken, focusing on fundamental rights and freedoms, gender-specific impacts, food insecurity, mineral supply-chains fragility, and humanitarian issues.

“ The European Union and its Member States need to ensure that human rights are protected for everyone and remain at the centre of the EU's response to the pandemic.

- ▶ **Full report:** [The COVID-19 response should leave no one behind: the pandemic's implications in the Great Lakes region](#)
- ▶ **Press release:** [COVID-19 in the Great Lakes region: leaving no one behind](#)



Revised Mining Code in the DRC

DR Congo - Revised Mining Code, new national governance, and COVID-19: impacts on the human rights of local communities

Ahead of the discussions of the 45th session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC45), EurAc and its partners organised a webinar to raise awareness on the consequences of the poor implementation of the revised Mining Code on human rights in the DRC.

The abundance of natural resources in the DRC and the economic poverty of the population living in mining areas continues to represent a paradox. More than two years after the adoption of the revised Mining Code, fundamental rights in mining areas are still not fully respected because of poor governance coupled with textual inconsistencies.

During the webinar, representatives of local organisations working on human rights in the mining sector questioned the effectiveness of the implementation of the revised Mining Code and its impact on the human rights of local populations, including in the context of COVID-19.

“Voices from Congolese civil society have risen to demand the effective implementation of the revised Mining Code, including a better distribution of wealth from mining operations for the benefit of local communities.

► **Organisers:**

Franciscans International
Justice & Paix
EurAc
Dominicans for Justice and Peace

► **Press release:** [DRC Revised Mining Code, local governance, and COVID-19: Between aspirations and reality](#)

► **Webinar report (French):** [RDC – Code minier révisé, nouvelle gouvernance nationale et COVID-19 : quels impacts sur les droits humains des communautés locales ?](#)



Security Sector Reform in the DRC

Monitoring and evaluation of the security sector reform in the DR Congo: what is the role of the European Union?

On 28 October 2020, EurAc and its partners hosted an online public conference to discuss the role of the EU regarding monitoring and evaluation of the security sector reform (SSR) in the DR Congo.

This conference aimed to contribute to strengthening citizen control of public action carried out in the field of security in the DRC by presenting research carried out by Congolese civil society organisations, thus offering:

1. An analysis of the security sector emanating from local civil society actors;
2. Recommendations to international actors involved in the security sector reform process in the DRC, including the European Union institutions and Member States;
3. A dialogue between civil society actors, researchers, and decision-makers to jointly reflect on the support for security sector reform in the DRC that they are providing or plan to provide in the coming years.

► **Organisers:**

Cordaid

EurAc

ASSN - African Security Sector Network



Picture © Photomonusco - Myriam Asmani



Human Rights in Burundi

Keeping track of the human rights situation in post-electoral context in Burundi

Burundi has been in a period of transition: the May 2020 presidential, legislative and local elections resulted in the election of a new President, Évariste Ndayishimiye. Former President Nkurunziza passed a few weeks later. Despite a certain openness of the new government towards the international community, this shift of power has not resolved Burundian issues on security and human rights situation continue to be critical. EurAc has closely been following the situation in the country.

Ahead of the 45th session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC45), EurAc and 42 other civil society organisations signed an [open letter to urge States to support the renewal of the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry \(Col\) on Burundi](#). The Col is the only independent mechanism mandated to document human rights violations and abuses, monitor, and publicly report on the situation in Burundi, with sufficient resources and experience to do so.

EurAc has also joined the [call for immediate release of Iwacu journalists](#), a statement signed by 65 local and European organisations. These four media workers were convicted on charges against State security for doing their job. As 2020 marked the first anniversary of their arrest, the new Burundian government was still showing little tolerance for independent journalism and free speech.



EU Regulation on Conflict Minerals

Ensuring transparency in the implementation of the European Union's Regulation on the supply of 3TG minerals

The EU Regulation on the responsible supply of tin, tungsten, tantalum and gold (3TG) from conflict-affected and high-risk areas was approved in 2017 and will enter into force in 2021. It has been an important first step towards enabling supply chains for these important minerals that are equitable and free from human rights abuse, but more actions need to be taken before 2021.

European Member States should ensure transparency in the implementation of the Regulation by publishing the list of companies subjected to it, and by doing so annually.

In a joint policy note directed at Member States and their Competent Authorities, EurAc and 20 organisations highlight three key concerns for them to take into account to ensure that the Regulation has a real impact on the practices of European importers of 3TG.

EurAc has been following the approval and implementation of the Regulation for years and is continuously consulting with other expert civil society organisations to ensure the dissemination of fact-based and relevant advocacy messages.

► **Joint policy note:** [Ensuring transparency in the implementation of the European Union's Regulation on the supply of 3TG minerals](#)





Picture © Frederic Triest

EurAc in the media

Press releases

EurAc strives to collaborate with the press so to give visibility to its advocacy messages. In 2019, EurAc published 3 press releases:

- **[Natural Resources]** 29 September 2020 - [DRC Revised Mining Code, local governance, and COVID-19: Between aspirations and reality](#)
- **[Human Rights] [Peace & security] [Natural Resources]** 27 May 2020 - [COVID-19 in the Great Lakes region: leaving no one behind](#)
- **[Natural Resources]** 2 March 2020 - [Civil society calls for transparency on the companies subjected to the European Union's Regulation on the supply of 3TG minerals](#)

Press coverage

EurAc was featured 5 times in EU and international newspapers:

- Audiobook: [Coltan - Dalle miniere senza leggi al vostro telefonino, Illecito. I Signori delle Frontiere 3](#), Radio 24, 2020
- [République démocratique du Congo : où sont les femmes ?](#), Femmes Plurielles, 7 September 2020
- [Covid-19: les pays du Sud face à la pandémie: le Congo RDC \(13\)](#), Portail Catholique Suisse, 5 June 2020
- [Coronavirus : dans le Rwanda confiné, l'absence de revenus durement ressentie](#), Le Monde, 29 March 2020
- [Les Tchadiens accusent l'UE de financer une dictature](#), Deutsche Welle, 5 February 2020

EurAc Info

A valuable tool for anyone interested in receiving regular updates on the Great Lakes region and/or on EurAc's advocacy work

EurAc Info is the weekly newsletter and press review on issues related to human rights, democracy, peace, security, and natural resources in the Great Lakes region.

What's in there?

- The latest news on Burundi, Rwanda and the DR Congo, as well as European policy on this region;
- The latest reports, invitations to events, articles and info from EurAc and its member organisations;
- The latest reports and press releases from local civil society organisations;
- Interesting reads, statements, research, campaign documents, etc.



■ **Subscribe!** ■

[eurac-network.org/en/
eurac-info-newsletter](http://eurac-network.org/en/eurac-info-newsletter)

Social Media



Twitter

- [@EurAc Net](#)
- More than **2,250** followers!



LinkedIn

- [European Network for Central Africa \(EurAc\)](#)
- Almost **300** followers!

Follow us, and...

- Keep track of EurAc's activities and advocacy messages
- Stay informed about EurAc member's activities in and on the Great Lakes region
- Get information on and from the Great Lakes region



Picture © Frederic Triest



Picture © Frederic Triest

Financial situation

EurAc works almost exclusively on the basis of the commitment and support of its member organisations. Their annual member fees enable the Secretariat, based in Brussels, to perform its advocacy and information work independently.

Revenues 2020	€
Membership fees	193.849,44
Additional members contributions	2.500,00
External project (Madini)	17.045,00
Total	213.394,44

In 2020, in addition to annual membership fees (91%), some members financially contributed to specific advocacy activities (1%) such as the organisation of public conferences and the publication of policy reports. The rest of the revenues (8%) stemmed from the Madini project financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Expenses 2020	€
Human Resources	152.228,61
Operating costs	34.044,86
Institutional costs	15.109,95
Communication & Fundraising	2.392,60
Advocacy activities	2.250,00
External projects	251,15
Total	206.277,17

Most expenses went to human resources (74%), followed by operating costs (17%), institutional costs (7%), and communication and fundraising (1%). Advocacy costs were much lower this year due to COVID-19 related restrictions. EurAc had to adapt by organising and disseminating online versions of the advocacy documents and activities.

Join the EurAc network!

Are you part of a NGO based in Europe working on/in the African Great Lakes region, more specifically Rwanda, Burundi, and/or the DR Congo? Are you interested in issues linked to human rights, participatory democracy, peace and security, and/or in promoting the sustainable management of natural resources in the region? Join the network!

A strong, well-known and legitimate network

- EurAc as an advocacy network is resting on a solid and multi-faceted expertise and from long-standing relations with policy and decision-makers in EU and Member States institutions and in United Nations agencies, as well as with key local civil society actors from the Great Lakes region.
- EurAc is in a unique position to monitor EU relations with the Great Lakes region and to send clear and fact-based messages that can shape the EU agenda and actions in accordance with the network's mission and principles.

Benefits to members

- EurAc offers thematic expertise and promotes informal exchange of views and information from the ground between its member organisations.
- EurAc's advocacy work is fuelled by its members, which are organisations with specific and strong expertise regarding human rights, peace and security as well as the sustainable management of natural resources in the Great Lakes region.
- EurAc offers internal and external networking possibilities, as well as dissemination and promotion of its members' activities.

More information

► eurac-network.org/en/become-eurac-member





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