

Annual Report 2019



eurAC

European network
for central africa



In the PDF version, the text
[underlined](#) is clickable

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Editorial by Camille Liewig, President of EurAc



2019 was an eventful year for the Great Lakes region, especially for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Burundi. After decades of war, crisis, and the monopolisation of political power resulting in the elections being postponed for two years, the Congolese people were finally able to express their desire for change. Political alternance was praised, but the lack of transparency with which the electoral results were handled leaves open questions on the democratic nature of the process. Thanks to the Episcopal Conference of the DRC (CENCO) and civil society organisations, 100,000 field observers were able to provide an estimation of the true result of the ballot. All those who value human rights and democracy can only deplore the lack of pressure from the international community and the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) to make truth prevail.

In Burundi, years after the violent repression of demonstrations against the third mandate of President Pierre Nkurunziza, arbitrary arrests of opponents continued in 2019. Government declarations kept fueling ethnic conflicts and increasingly portraying the international community as a national enemy. In 2020, EurAc will continue its advocacy work towards the European Union on issues related to democracy, especially in view of the upcoming Burundian presidential elections.

The EU also went through an important election and the renewal of its Parliament. Shortly after the elections, EurAc published a series of memorandums on the region to raise awareness amongst Members of the European Parliament on issues of political participation and natural resources.

In 2019 EurAc also published an in-depth report on the EU and its Member States' policies on women's political and civic participation in Rwanda and in the DRC. We hope that this critical analysis will help trigger the changes necessary to improve women empowerment and promote their role in society.

This was also a year of institutional changes. I would like to thank my predecessor François Mercier, for doing such a wonderful job during the past years, despite the many challenges. I am confident that he will stay close to EurAc in the future. Taking over from him will be an arduous task, but I know that we can count on the support of our members.

Thanking you for your continued support,

Camille Liewig

About EurAc

Created in 2003, the European Network for Central Africa (EurAc) gathers member organisations from civil society in several European countries. These organisations work on and in the Great Lakes region. They support civil society organisations in **Burundi**, the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)** and **Rwanda** in their efforts to promote **peace**, the defence of **human rights** and **development**.

EurAc's mission is to carry out **advocacy work towards the European Union (EU)** to ensure a strong, coherent and sustainable engagement by the EU and its Member States, integrated to a regional approach, in order to help the Great Lakes region build a better future.

Secretariat



Brune Mercier
Director

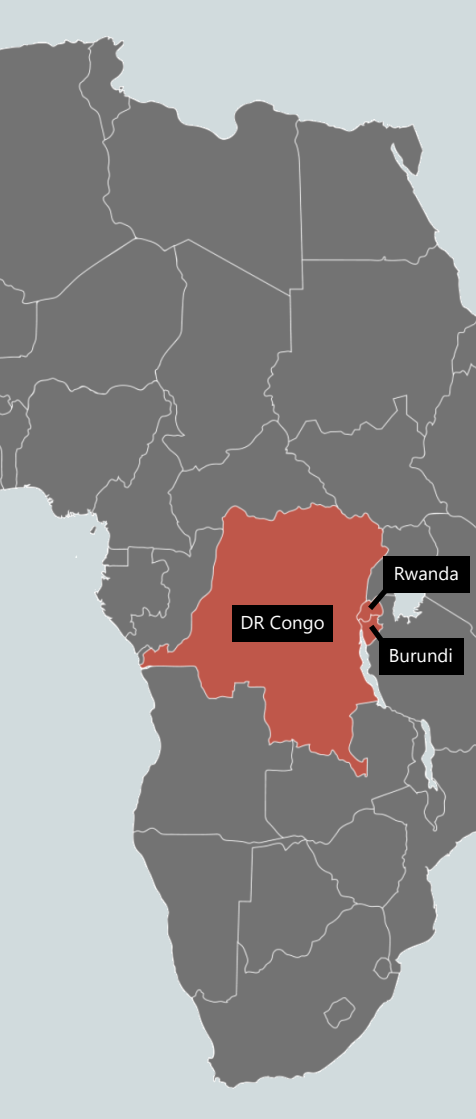
Giuseppe Cioffo
Programme &
Policy Officer



Daniela Bishop
Communication
Officer

Board of Directors (2019)

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- **Véronique Paternostre** | CNCD 11.11.11
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- **Pieter-Jan Hamels** | 11.11.11
- **Samuel Pommeret** | CCFD-Terre Solidaire
- **Nikki De Zwaan** | Cordaid
- **Enkelada Papa** | Franciscans International
- **François Mercier** | Fastenopfer



Objectives

EurAc aims for peace, security, inclusive political participation, the sustainable and equitable management of natural resources as well as the full respect of human rights in the Great Lakes region, namely in the DR Congo, Rwanda and Burundi.

Thematic priorities

Peace & Security

Because political and security tensions threaten stability, security and development in the Great Lakes region.

Democracy & Human Rights

Because political participation as well as civil and political rights and freedoms in the Great Lakes region are under attack, particularly around the electoral cycles.

Natural Resources

Because the sustainable and equitable management of natural resources can constitute a significant lever for reducing poverty and for stability.



Theory of change

If EurAc is a strong, legitimate, coordinated, well-known and recognised network

If it is able to make the voices of CSOs from Burundi, Rwanda and DRC heard and taken into consideration by EU decision-makers at all levels

If it has an influential position on human rights, inclusive political participation, security, peace building and management of natural resources

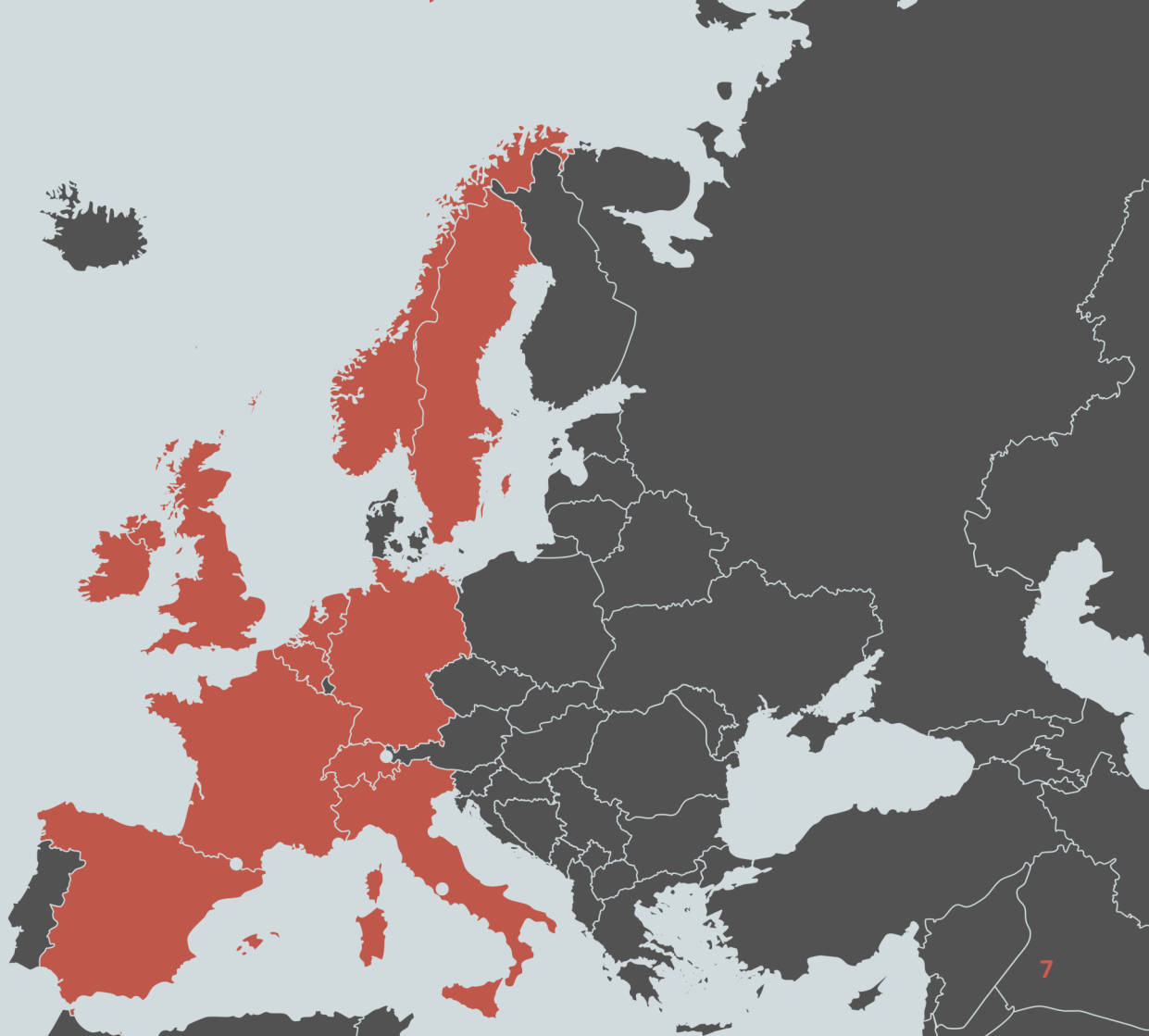
Then the EU and its Member States will develop and implement strong and coherent policies in these domains in the three countries.

EurAc's members



Countries of origin

- Belgium (13)
- France (5)
- Germany (1)
- Ireland (1)
- Italy (1)
- The Netherlands (4)
- Norway (1)
- Spain (2)
- Sweden (2)
- Switzerland (4)
- UK (1)
- International (2)







Position papers

In 2019, EurAc sent out 12 policy briefs, letters & statements to EU policy and decision-makers, notably on the DRC elections results and on EU support to African Union (AU)'s Human Rights Observers in Burundi.

FOCUS | Policy brief on human rights in the DR Congo

| DR Congo new presidency and Universal Periodic Review (UPR): urging the EU and its Member States to issue strong recommendations on the human rights situation in the country, 25 March 2019.

The 2019 cycle of the UPR of the DRC took place in a particular political context. EurAc and the CCPR-Centre stressed that the apparent political alternance should not lead to minimising the alarming human rights situation in the country.

The objective of the [joint policy brief](#) was to call on the EU and its member states to issue strategic recommendations during the upcoming UPR of the DRC, notably on:

- Citizen's participation in public life and electoral process
- The shrinking civic and media space
- Women's participation in political life
- Sustainable and fair management of natural resources (especially on customary and indigenous land rights, and in the extractive sector)
- The fight against corruption



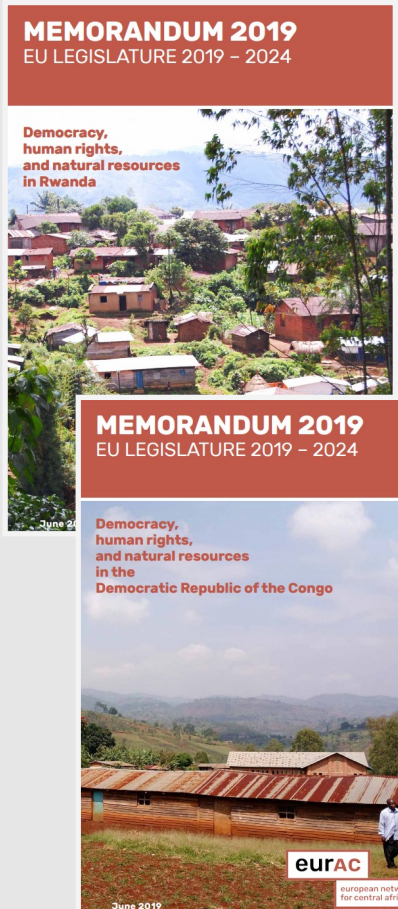
FOCUS | Memorandums: EU legislature 2019-2024

In June 2019, EurAc published two memorandums on democracy, human rights and natural resources respectively in [the DRC](#) and in [Rwanda](#).

In doing so, EurAc aimed to provide newly elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) with an overview of the main challenges and dynamics shaping the Great Lakes region and both countries, as well as with concrete and actionable recommendations.

The memorandums focused on EU interventions on the shrinking civic and political spaces, human rights violations, governance crisis, corruption, agriculture, insecurity, conflict minerals sourcing, among other issues.

The objective was to remind the EU institutions of their fundamental values and engagements to promote and strengthen human rights, peace, development, inclusive political participation and the sustainable management of natural resources in both countries.





FOCUS | Report on women's political and civic participation

Promoting gender equality: European rhetoric in view of the facts

| Challenges and lessons learned for transformative European support for women's political and civic participation in the DRC and in Rwanda.

In this [report](#) published in December 2019, EurAc focusses on the strategies and actions undertaken by the EU, Switzerland, France and Belgium for enhancing women's political and civic participation and their presence in decision-making bodies at all levels.

Cultural beliefs and stereotypes play an important role in withholding women from taking on an active role in public life. However, institutional and legal frameworks can play a major role in enabling the participation of women. The report also scrutinises the EU Gender Action Plan, identifying significant challenges in its implementation in partner countries.

It suggests concrete actions and recommendations for the implementation of a truly transformative approach for the inclusion of women and and calls on the EU, Switzerland, France and Belgium to intensify their efforts in this domain.

FOCUS | Public conference on women's participation

Together with Cordaid, EurAc organised a [public conference](#) in The Hague in order to promote and discuss the contents of the report on women's political and civic participation in the DRC and in Rwanda.

Congolese gender expert Françoise Mukuku gave her insights on gender equality in the political and civic spheres in the DRC. Fidèle Rutayisire, RWAMREC's director, discussed his work on positive masculinities in Rwanda. Cordaid's gender expert Anne Kwakkenbos shared her experience in the domain and Maurice Paulussen from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave his insights as the coordinating policy officer within the Great Lakes team.



“

At the moment in the DRC, not respecting the quota for women representation in political parties electoral lists does not constitute a legal reason to reject the list. This needs to change.

Françoise Mukuku
Gender expert

FOCUS | Workshop and public conference on the EU Regulation on responsible mineral sourcing

On 29 and 30 April 2019, EurAc and its partners* organised a day [workshop](#) to draft recommendations jointly with civil society organisations from the DRC and Colombia, two countries with large extractive sectors and affected by violent conflicts, and their European counterparts. A [public conference](#) followed to share these recommendations with EU policy makers.

Given the important role played by local actors in producing countries to ensure transparent production chains, it is of great importance that their points of view on the implementation of the EU Regulation and on its accompanying measures are heard.

Participants discussed the state of implementation of the Regulation and the risks, opportunities and challenges it offers as well as its accompanying measures for communities and miners in their respective countries. EurAc and the co-organisers published a [report](#) detailing the recommendations produced during the workshop.

* Partners: Cordaid, GermanWatch, Heinrich Böll Stiftung Bogotá, Justice & Paix, OENZ.



FOCUS | Training in EU advocacy for civil society from the Great Lakes

Each year, EurAc organises a [training](#) to help civil society actors and pro-democracy activists better understand the functioning of the European Union so to frame effective advocacy messages and to link-up with relevant actors within EU institutions.

Objectives

- Strengthen civil society's capacity to advocate at the EU level
- Create links with civil society members from the Great Lakes region

Theory mixed with practice

The training's formula is what makes it a success: a combination of theory and practice. Participants received information on advocacy strategy, on the European Union's institutions and their positions on the Great Lakes region, as well as practical advocacy tools and tips for communicating effectively. This was followed by meetings with 11 decision makers (either from the EU or Member States).

“

The training's practical methodology allows for easy comprehension. Theory being followed by practice is what made the training module dynamic and concrete.

A participant to the 2019 training



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 6 press releases:

- 2 within the DRC's post-electoral context
- 2 on women's rights in the DRC
- 1 regarding the publication of the 2019 memorandums
- 1 in reaction to France having resumed its cooperation with Burundi

Press coverage

EurAc was featured in 4 articles and 1 radio interview in EU and international newspapers.

Following the press release in July on France having resumed its cooperation with Burundi, EurAc was mentioned by [Le Monde](#) as well as by the Burundian media [Radio RPA](#).

EurAc's expertise on natural resources was solicited by [France24](#) for an article about food insecurity in Rwanda, and by [Una Città](#) as well as by [Radio24](#) regarding conflict minerals.

A / 2020

Au Rwanda, un "miracle" économique terni par l'insécurité alimentaire



Publié le : 06/04/2019 - 09:52 Modifié le : 07/04/2019 - 08:56



Le Monde Afrique - BURUNDI

Parti

France-Burundi : une reprise de coopération qui fâche

Le Quai d'Orsay avait reçu la visite du chef de la diplomatie burundaise en octobre 2018, relançant un partenariat alors que le pays est sous sanctions de l'UE depuis 2016.

Par Amel-Gilbert Bukeyenza - Publié le 30 juillet 2019 à 12h48 - Mis à jour le 30 juillet 2019 à 20h35

🕒 Lecture 3 min.



La charge in
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FFFI

una città

Le domande vengono prima delle risposte

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L'ultimo numero



Giuseppe Cioffi è Program e Policy Officer presso il Network europeo per l'Africa Centrale (EurAc)

internazionalismo

Una Città n° 228 / 2019 marzo-aprile

Intervista a Giuseppe Cioffi
Realizzata da Barbara Barbonchi, Bettina Foa, Simona Nardin

LE TRE T E L'ORO

Per evitare che i cosiddetti "minerali di conflitto", così importanti per le economie locali, vadano a finanziare i gruppi armati della zona dei Grandi laghi, nel 2017 l'Ue ha finalmente varato un regolamento che obbliga le imprese a rispettare il dovere di diligenza nell'importazione di tantalio, tungsteno e stagno, l'importanza del ruolo dei cittadini e degli stati membri nel fare pressioni per la tutela dei diritti dei lavoratori africani. Intervista a Giuseppe Cioffi.

Memorie di interviste e foto

- Tutte le interviste
- Tutti gli interventi
- Tutti i collaboratori
- Tutti i sommari
- Tutti i PDF
- Tutti i servizi fotografici
- Catalogo Libri
- Di politica e altro

Puoi spiegarmi cos'è EurAc e di cosa si occupa?

EurAc Info

[EurAc Info](#) is our weekly newsletter and press review on the topics of human rights and democracy, peace, security, and natural resources in the Great Lakes region.

What's in there?

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

In other words...

EurAc Info is a valuable tool for anyone who is interested in receiving regular updates on the Great Lakes region and/or on EurAc's advocacy work.

Subscribe!

- eurac-network.org/en/eurac-info-newsletter



Twitter

[@EurAc Net](#)

More than
2,000 followers!

[Follow us](#), and...

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

Financial situation

In 2019, EurAc's only income sources stemmed from its members. In addition to annual membership fees (88%), some members contributed to specific projects (12%) such as the organisation of public conferences and the publication of policy reports.

Most expenses went to human resources (67%), followed by advocacy activities (15%), operating costs (13%), institutional costs (3%) and communication and fundraising (2%).

Reserves had to be used to fill the gap between income and expenses.

Revenues 2019

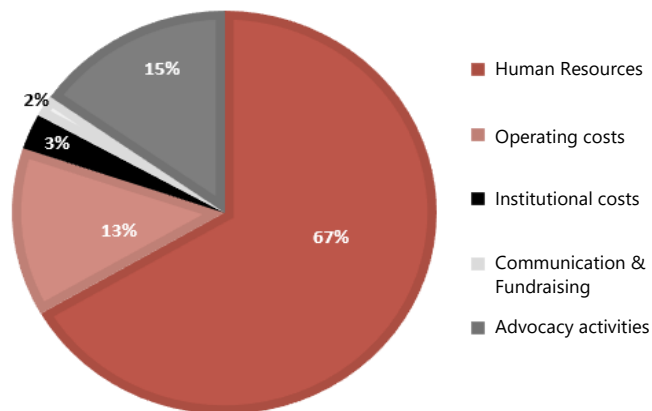
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Membership fees	166.226
Additional members contribution (through specific projects)	22.156
Total	188.382

Expenses 2019

€

Human Resources	138.873,21
Operating costs	28.165,18
Institutional costs	5.895,06
Communication & Fundraising	3.619,74
Advocacy activities	31.803,41
Total	208.356,60
<i>Reserves used</i>	<i>19.975</i>



Want to join the network?

Benefits

- EurAc as a network holds a solid and multi-faceted expertise and has long-standing relations with key local civil society actors from the Great Lakes region, as well as policy and decision-makers in EU institutions, in EU capital cities and in United Nations agencies.
- 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.

Organisations

Organisations must be NGOs based in geographical Europe working on or in the Great Lakes region of Africa, more specifically Rwanda, Burundi, and the DR Congo, in any of EurAc's thematic areas.

Individual members

EurAc also welcomes individual membership. Individuals can be anyone based in a European country (geographical Europe) with a particular interest in or work experience in the Great Lakes.

More information on:
eurac-network.org/en/become-eurac-member



eurAc



**european network
for central africa**

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