



eurAC

European network
for central africa

Annual report **2021**

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Editorial by Camille LIEWIG, President of EurAc

Dear readers,

The situation in the **Great Lakes region**, after a relative calm following years of political crisis, is preparing to face a new important episode in its history with the approach of new elections in **the Democratic Republic of the Congo**, which carry the seeds of contestation and threaten, once again, to destabilise the region as a whole.

In DRC, the up-coming 2023 elections have already been subject of criticism and fear expressed by civil society. Since 2021 last semester, EurAc, together with its members and their Congolese partners, has begun to mobilize the EU for the crucial period opening, and will pursue its advocacy effort with the publication of an important report on the state of play and the **pre-electoral issues** at stake.



Despite a semblance of calm in **Burundi** with official speeches of openness from the Burundian authorities, the pressure on **human rights activists** and the restriction of free expression remains as real as ever. The release and judicial victory of **human rights defender** Germain Rukuki thanks to important networking efforts should not make us forget the many activists still in prison or in exile and the intimidation experienced on a daily basis by the population.

At the institutional level, the great dynamic impelled in 2020 with the construction of a new innovative strategy is continuing and has been operationalised. In 2021, EurAc had the pleasure to integrate **2 new member organisations** and had the opportunity to join several consortia where the expertise of the network is put at the service of members and external allies. The covid epidemic being less present, EurAc's team was also able to travel back to the region and renew its contact and further develop them with (new) local partners.

I sincerely thank our members for the trust they have placed in me through the renewal of my mandate as President. In the two coming years, with the help of all board's administrator, I will be committed to support the network and its secretariat in its work in order to better address the challenges of EU policies 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



Vasty MIGUEL,
Communication officer



Teodora NGUEN,
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Daniela BISHOP,
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Amal HAMICH,
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Board members

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Secours catholique – Caritas France
- Véronique PATERNOSTRE,
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- Lore BERTREM,
CNCD- 11.11.11.
- Davide SOTO NARANJO,
Free Press Unlimited
- Samuel POMMERET,
CCFD-Terre Solidaire
- Annick VAN LOOKEREN CAMPAGNE,
Cordaid

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.

Thematic areas



Peace & security



Democracy & Human rights



Natural resources



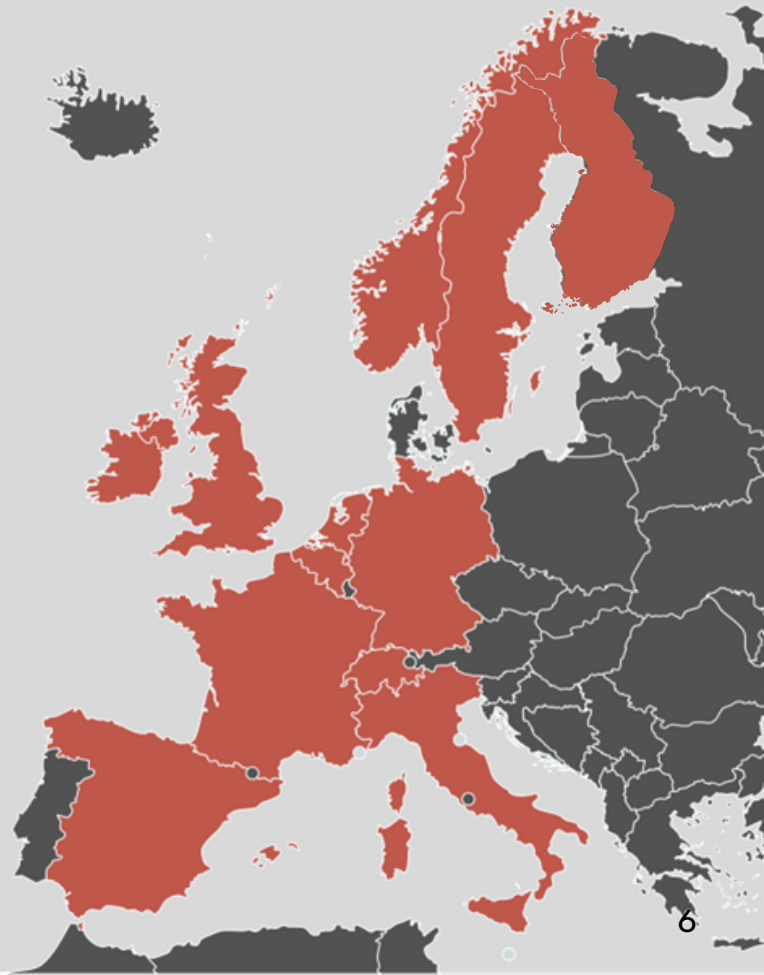
Member organisations



EurAc members are European civil society organisations working in and on the region and supporting local civil society in Burundi, DR Congo and Rwanda in the promotion of peace and development and the defence of human rights.

Country of origin

- Belgium (11)
- France (5)
- Germany (1)
- Ireland (1)
- Italy (1)
- Netherlands (4)
- Norway (1)
- Spain (2)
- Sweden (2)
- Switzerland (4)
- United Kingdom (1)
- Finland (1)
- International (2)



A glimpse of 2021



2021 for **EurAc** in numbers

- 4 policy reports, 4 policy briefs and 4 statements that were publicly or confidentially disseminated ;
- 30+ key decision-makers met;
- 7 public events organised ;
- About 20 meetings with other civil society organisations coordinated;
- 3 working-missions of the Secretariat in the Great Lakes Region

🔍 Preparing women's political participation in 2023 elections in the DR Congo

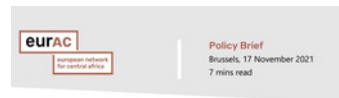
EurAc's work on the respect of human rights includes promoting gender equality and women's rights in the Great Lakes region. The network published a policy brief with recommendations for the European Union (EU) and its Member States to actively support women's political participation before, during and after the 2023 elections in the DR Congo.

The EU's latest Gender Action Plan (GAP III) outlines a forward-looking vision to make support to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) an integral part of EU external action and development policy. By 2025, 85% of all new actions throughout external relations should contribute to GEWE.

Parity in the DRC is a constitutional principle, which in theory constitutes a unique opportunity for equal representation of men and women in decision-making bodies.

However, women in the DRC remain severely underrepresented at the political level. At least as important, is the question to what extent they are allowed to vote and are enabled to vote in an informed way.

To meet EU's own high ambitions, EurAc outlines recommendations for a more coherent, continued, and strategic GEWE engagement by the EU and its Member States focusing on pre-election, election and post-election times in the DRC.



DRCongo's 2023 elections: the European Union and its Member States should actively support women's political participation



This policy brief outlines recommendations for a more coherent, continued, and strategic Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) engagement by the European Union (EU) and its Member States focusing on pre-election, elections and post-election times in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The full participation of women in political structures and in public decision-making processes is an important indicator of the level of gender equality and the cornerstone of democracy in a country. In the DRC, women represent 51% of the population.¹ However, women's political participation through running for office, voting or actively participating in democratic oversight by citizens has remained low across the board.

¹ [Banque Mondiale, République du Congo, UN WOMEN](https://donnees.banquemondiale.org/indicateur/dy), consulted on 10 November 2021.

Read our policy brief : **[DR Congo's 2023 elections: the European Union and its Member States should actively support women's political participation](#)**





Monitoring the implementation of the EU Conflict Minerals Regulation

The 1st of January 2021 marked the entry into force of the European Regulation on Responsible Sourcing of tin, tungsten tantalum and gold (3TG) from conflict-affected and high-risk areas.

The Regulation aims to ensure that European companies carry out due diligence checks on their suppliers to break the link between the exploitation of mineral resources and violent conflicts. EurAc had actively been pushing for its approval and has since then been monitoring its implementation.

In June 2021, EurAc, together with its members and a coalition of international NGOs, published a report analyzing the effective implementation status of the regulation in the Member States and underlines the persistent difficulties and shortcomings for its full effectiveness.

Read the review paper: [The EU Conflict Minerals Regulation - Implementation at the EU Member States level](#)



The EU Conflict Minerals Regulation
Implementation at the EU Member State level

Review paper
June 2021



European
NGO Coalition
on Conflict Minerals



Workshop with civil society organisations from producing countries to propose concrete solution to EU decision-makers

In September 2021, EurAc and its partners hosted a 3 days workshop followed by a public online conference bringing together local and European civil society representatives, EU officials and companies. This event gathered more than **100** of participants and provided recommendations to EU decision-makers with regards to the implementation of the EU 3TG Regulation, its accompanying measures as well as related EU Regulations currently being drafted and discussed.

Madini – Strengthening regional stability in the Great Lakes



The event was supported by the Madini project that is implemented by International Alert in consortium with EurAc, IPIS, OGP and Justice Plus in the DRC.

The project aims to improve security, social cohesion and human rights in the conflict-ridden mineral-rich regions of eastern DRC. EurAc lead and implement the EU-targeted advocacy strategy.

Within the framework of the project, the report **Conflict analysis and stakeholder mapping in South Kivu and Ituri** was published in June 2021.





Human rights in Burundi

Since the political crisis started in 2015, EurAc has been monitoring the situation in Burundi at the level of human rights, security and political participation. With the entry into power of President Ndayishimiye in 2020, some things have changed but the general situation remains problematic.

Calling for the EU to respect its engagements on human rights

As the Council of the EU and its preparatory bodies review the situation in Burundi and related EU policy, EurAc and 11 other organisations expressed their concern that the EU and some of its Member States appeared willing to overlook the lack of meaningful human rights progress and widespread impunity for past and ongoing serious human rights violations in the country.

Open letter - [The EU should honor its commitments to human rights in Burundi](#)

Pleading for the renewal of the UN Commission of Inquiry in Burundi

On the occasion of the 48th session of the Human Rights Council, FIACAT together with the CCPR-Centre, OMCT and EurAc issued an oral statement decrying the persistence of serious human rights violations despite the hopes for change nourished by the political changeover; and calling for the renewal of the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry in order to ensure the documentation and in-depth monitoring of the human rights situation in Burundi.

Joint Statement - [HRC48 Item 4: Interactive Dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi](#)



DR Congo – Pygmies indigenous people's rights

The recent adoption of a law on the protection of indigenous pygmy people by the Congolese National Assembly is encouraging, but indigenous pygmy people in the DRC still face discrimination and violations of their rights, as well as land grabbing.

The PEUPLE project was conceived at the request of Congolese organisations (PIDP, SPFA and REBAC) in partnership with a consortium of three European organisations (AEDH, DOCIP, EurAc) and aims to promote the participation of indigenous Pygmy people in the DRC in the sustainable management of land and natural resources and to strengthen the technical, organisational and advocacy capacities of Congolese Pygmy rights organisations.

In May 2021, EurAc and its partners hosted an online conference to discuss the promotion of the participation of indigenous pygmy peoples in the sustainable management of land and natural resources in the DR Congo. In August, EurAc and its partners organised a joint mission in Kinshasa in order to present our key political messages to EU and Congolese decision-makers, and to meet with partners and network from civil society.





EurAc in the media

Press release

[Human Rights] 27 October 2021 - CENI: the European Union must adopt a firm position on the respect of the electoral process in the DR Congo

[Natural Resources] 9 June 2021 - New report shows diverging implementation of the European Conflict Minerals Regulation across EU Member States

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PRESS RELEASE | 27 OCTOBER 2021

CENI: the European Union must adopt a firm position on the respect of the electoral process in the DR Congo

The European Network for Central Africa (EurAc) and its members regret that the appointment of the new president of the CENI Denis Kadima took place in the absence of consensus. The European Union (EU) must do everything possible to avoid a major political crisis that could jeopardise the holding of peaceful democratic elections in 2023.

On Saturday 23 October 2021, President Félix Tshisekedi signed the ordinance appointing the members of the new bureau of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), thus confirming the controversial choice of Denis Kadima as president of the institution in charge of organising the 2023 elections. Although Denis Kadima's electoral expertise is recognised by many Congolese and international actors, a consensus on his appointment could not be found among the representatives of the eight religious denominations, which are responsible for appointing this authority. The Catholic and Protestant Churches fear that his proximity to the current authorities will undermine his duty of independence. This non-consensual appointment bears the seeds of potential future electoral disputes.

If measures are not taken quickly to ease tensions and strengthen the confidence of the Congolese population in the credibility and independence of the electoral process, the DR Congo risks heading towards a major and destabilising crisis.

Press Release - New report shows diverging implementation of the European Conflict Minerals Regulation across EU Member States

09/06/2021

Today, a Coalition of European NGOs working on responsible mineral sourcing have published a review paper discussing the state of implementation of the European Conflict Minerals Regulation across European Union (EU) Member States. The report highlights the shortcomings of the Regulation and the general lack of transparency that hinders effective and efficient monitoring of companies.

The European Conflict Minerals Regulation, also called the Regulation on Responsible Sourcing of

Press coverage

RDC/Respect du processus électoral : l'EurAc appelle l'Union européenne à adopter une position ferme, ElectionNet, 27 October 2021

Elections 2023: "L'Union européenne doit adopter un positionnement ferme pour le bon déroulement du processus électoral en RDC" (EurAc), Journal des Nations, 27 October 2021

Kritik an EU-Verordnung zu Konfliktmineralien, Table Europe, 2 September 2021

L'UE verso la revoca delle sanzioni al Burundi. La protesta dei difensori dei diritti umani, africaeuropa.it, 29 June 2021

Des ONG internationales interpellent l'UE sur la reprise de la coopération avec le Burundi, RFI, 21 June 2021

Interview: Minerais de sang : l'UE peut mieux faire, Africa Radio, 11 June 2021

Un nouveau rapport montre des divergences dans la mise en œuvre du Règlement européen sur les minerais de conflit par les États membres, Desk Eco, 9 June 2021



EurAc info

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

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!** ■

<https://www.eurac-network.org/en/eurac-info-newsletter>

Social media

Twitter

- [@Eurac_Net](#)
- More than 2,400 followers

Linkedin

- [European Network for central Africa \(EurAc\)](#)
- Almost 480 followers

Follow us and...

- Keep up to date with EurAc's advocacy activities and messages
- Stay informed about the activities of EurAc members in and around the Great Lakes Region
- Get information about and from the Great Lakes region





Financial situation

EurAc works almost exclusively on the basis of the commitment and support of its member organisations. Their annual membership fees enable the Brussels-based Secretariat to carry out its advocacy and information work independently.

Revenues 2021*

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Membership Fees | 188.189 € |
| External project MADINI (Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs) | 27.973 € |
| External project PEUPLE (Agence Française de développement - AFD) | 7.020 € |
| External consultancy on Burundi (Open Society European Policy Institute) | 8.000 € |
| Total | 231.182 € |

In 2021, the vast majority of EurAc's revenues came from the members' annual membership fees (81.4%). The rest of the revenues stemmed from external projects such as the MADINI project financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (12.1%) and the PEUPLE project financed by the French Agency for Development (AFD), (3.4%). EurAc was also supported by Open Society European Policy Institution for a specific consultancy on Burundi (3.5%).

Expenses 2021*

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Human ressources | 161.722,16 € |
| Operating costs | 28.611,38 € |
| Institutionnal and network life | 8.269,06 € |
| Communication | 1.167,55 € |
| Advocacy activities | 13.349,69 € |
| Total | 213.119,84 € |

Most expenses directly serve the Secretariat's advocacy work, which is essentially based on the cost of human resources (75.5%) and a series of activities (such as field missions, the organisation of meetings/events or the drafting of reports for example) called advocacy activities (6.23%) and communication (0.5%). Other operating costs (3.9%) and institutional costs (13.92%) remain limited.

*The figure and financial results for the year 2021 shown in these tables remain provisional until their final approval by the external auditor.

Join us!

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.



More information

► <https://www.eurac-network.org/en/become-eurac-member>

Join us!

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.



(c) Frédéric Triest





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