

United Nations officials have called eastern Congo the worst place in the world in terms of sexual violence because of the hundreds of thousands of people who have been sexually assaulted there in recent years. Most of the victims were women and girls, although there appears to be an increasing number of rapes of men and boys.

The causes are not clear. But the area is bitterly contested by many armed groups battling over territory teeming with mineral riches. And the Congolese government's hold on the vast country is notoriously weak, with large stretches outside of its control. But even in areas where United Nations peacekeepers are stationed, mass rapes have occurred.

Aid workers in Fizi said more than 150 people had been raped since the beginning of the year, with at least five cases of large groups of people being attacked at the same time, often going to or coming from local markets.

Advocates Corner

This month the SAPR Program would like to acknowledge A1C Mary Ryan! We are fortunate to have her as part of our team. A1C Ryan completed the required 40 hours Victim Advocate Course 1 Nov 2010. Her witty spirit has been a pleasant present!

When A1C Ryan was asked, "Why would you like to work as an Sexual Assault Victim Advocate?" she replied "The main reason is that I wanted to make a difference in somebody's life. They are already going through something that is very traumatic, I just want to be there so that it will make it easier for them to move on."

When asked, "Has becoming an advocate changed your views on sexual harassment and sexual assault?" she replied: "Yes, I knew the basic information on sexual harassment and sexual assault, but I never really understood what the difference was. Now I am able to explain it to others so that they will know. When they are confronted with that kind of situation they can handle it accordingly."

Some of A1C Ryan's accomplishments since joining the Air Force include a letter of appreciation from the Special Olympics and upcoming promotion in September! Welcome to our TEAM A1C Ryan! Thanks for your dedication to Altus AFB and Community!



Resourceful Links

<https://97amw.portal.altus.af.mil/sites/AMW/sarc/default.aspx>

<http://www.sapr.mil>

<http://www.rainn.org>

<http://www.ocadvsa.org>

<http://www.safehelpline.org>

Resourceful Contacts

SAPR Hotline 580 649-0656
Chaplain 580 481-7485
Mental Health 580 481-5376
ACMI House 580 482-3800

Security Forces 580 481-7444
OSI 580 481-7720
Command Post 580 481-6313



Sexual Assault Prevention & Response™

SARC— Cheryl Jones
Deputy SARC—Anderal B. Ward

Office number 580 481-7428/7835
Bldg 46 (Clinic) Suite 1006/1007

Helpful Altus SAPR Program links:

<https://97amw.portal.altus.af.mil/sites/AMW/sarc/default.aspx>

<http://newpreview.afnews.af.mil/altus/altusafbsapr.asp>

May 2011 Newsletter

24/7 Crisis line

580 649-0656



Rapes Are Again Reported in Eastern Congo

By JEFFREY GETTELMAN

Published: February 25, 2011

New York Times

Note to Readers this is a global prospective of the effects of sexual assault in Eastern Congo.

NAIROBI, Kenya — More than 40 people, including men, women and children, have been raped in the past two weeks in eastern Congo in roughly the same area as a series of rapes earlier this year, United Nations officials said on Friday.

On two separate occasions, the victims were coming back from the market in large groups when they were attacked, aid workers said, and the most likely culprits were rebel forces hiding out in the thickly forested hills of the eastern areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

"Rape continues to be a plague, a pandemic, which risks spreading across the D.R.C.," said Maurizio Giuliano, a United Nations spokesman in Congo. "It is used by belligerent parties against civilians, as a weapon of war."

Mr. Giuliano added, "Most of the rapes are committed by opposition groups, and while we call on all to respect civilians, only an end to the conflict can realistically end their plight."

The rapes happened in the Fizi area, a war-torn and relatively inaccessible part of eastern Congo, where there are few aid organizations or United Nations peacekeepers. In early January, dozens of people were raped in the same area by soldiers in the national army.

The Congolese government has taken the rare step of prosecuting the soldiers and sentencing the commanding officer, Lt. Col. Kibibi Mutware, to 20 years in prison. Several other officers were also punished.

Upcoming Events

Bystander Intervention Training
All Classes are at the Chapel Annex
Building 116 Room 109-110

Male Classes

2 May @ 2:30 pm - 4:00 pm
4 May @ 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm
9 May @ 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm
16 May @ 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

Female Class

23 May @ 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

If you've been Sexually Assaulted

Go to a safe place

Do not shower

Do not eat or drink

Do not change clothes

Contact the SAPR Office

Preventing Sexual Assault is Everyones Duty