

## **Speaker from North Kivu, Congo**

June 26, 2009

Report #110

The deadliest war in the world, also the most neglected, is the war in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. This war began in 1996 and is estimated to have cost more than 5 million lives – the most deadly conflict since World War II. Most of these deaths are not combat deaths that make headlines, but deaths due to exposure as people flee the continuing battle among at least five major groups: (1) the Congolese Army (which is frequently accused of human rights abuses); (2) MONUC—the United Nations forces; (3) the pro-Tutsi militia; (4) the remnants of the Rwandan genocidaries who were pushed into the eastern Congo; and, (5) local Congolese forces called Mai-Mai. In North Kivu province alone more than one million out of six million people are internally displaced and living in internally displaced camps (IDP) built on lava from the nearby active volcanoes.

Zawadi Nikuze is the Coordinator of AGLI's Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) program in North Kivu. In that position she has been conducting HROC workshops in IDP camps, with people as they return to their home communities, and also in the countryside. Zawadi was born in Goma, the capital of North Kivu and is about thirty years old. She is fluent in English, French, Swahili, and Kinyarwanda. She specifically wishes to speak about the prevalence of rape in this conflict. It seems that anyone with a gun in this region considers it acceptable to rape women, from young girls to older women.

This is your opportunity to bring Zawadi to your community to learn about this most deadly conflict and the effects of systemic rape. She will be in the United States on a speaking tour for about a month between the middle of September and Thanksgiving.

The title of her main presentation will be "The Deadliest War Since WWII with Rape as a Weapon: The Continuing Violence in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo." If you would like to arrange one or more speaking engagements for Zawadi in your community please let me know by email to [dave@aglionline.org](mailto:dave@aglionline.org). [Do not use "reply" to this message as the email will not go to Dave.]

Peace,

Dave

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