

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

[Home](#)

> [Research Program](#)

> Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment please email Basesdedonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca.

31 May 2013

COG104431.FE

Republic of the Congo: treatment of members of the Lari and Nibolek ethnic groups, including their relationship with the Colonel Marcel Ntsourou
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

1. Lari Ethnic Group

No new information about the Lari ethnic group, compared with the information provided in Response COG104087 of 1 June 2012, which repeats the content of Response COG103627 of 26 October 2010, could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

2. Nibolek Ethnic Group

Limited information on the Nibolek ethnic group could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

In 2003, Refugees International (RI), an NGO that advocates for the human rights of displaced persons (RI n.d.), stated that both the Nibolek and the Lari are subgroups of the Kongo ethnic group, the largest ethnic group in the Republic of the Congo, and their members live mostly in the southern part of the country (RI 21 May 2003). The term "nibolek" combines the names of three southern provinces, that is, Niari, Bouenza and Lekoumou (ibid.; Missié 2008, 836). According to RI, this term is a "testament to the confusion of ethnic and political loyalties" in the Republic of the Congo (RI 21 May 2003).

3. Colonel Marcel Ntsourou

No information indicating whether ties exist between Marcel Ntsourou and the Lari or Nibolek ethnic groups could be found among the sources consulted. However, the following information about Colonel Ntsourou may be useful.

3.1 Beach Disappearances Case

Colonel Marcel Ntsourou was put on trial in 2005 for the [translation] "Beach disappearances case" (FIDH Dec. 2005, 16; TRIAL 21 June 2012b). According to Track Impunity Always (TRIAL), a law association founded in 2002 in Geneva that is against impunity and has consultative status before the United Nations Economic and Social Council (TRIAL n.d.), over 6,500 refugees of the Republic of the Congo returning from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) crossed the river Congo between 5 and 14 May 1999 to get to Beach, the river port of Brazzaville (ibid. 21 June 2012a). They had found refuge in the DRC following the conflicts between the Congolese Armed Forces and [TRIAL English version] "politico-military groups known as the Ninjas" in the Brazzaville region between 1998 and 1999 (ibid.). These refugees were received by

members of the military forces of the Republic of the Congo and split into separate groups (ibid.). The youth, who made up one of these groups, subsequently disappeared (ibid.). According to relatives of the disappeared persons, they were transferred to the Headquarters for Military Intelligence (Direction centrale des renseignements militaires, DCRM) before they disappeared (ibid.). Colonel Marcel Ntsourou was the head of DCRM at that time (ibid.).

Colonel Ntsourou was charged with genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity in this case (FIDH Dec. 2005, 23; TRIAL 21 June 2012b). Colonel Ntsourou denied that the disappeared had been detained by the DCRM, stating that it had detained [translation] "only the Ninja war prisoners captured on a number of fronts in the Pool region as well as anyone who was in intelligence with them" (ibid.). He and his 14 other co-accused were found not guilty by the Criminal Court of Brazzaville (FIDH Dec. 2005, 23), which specified that [TRIAL English version] "the proof necessary to reconstitute the chain of command and thus establish the responsibility of the accused concerning the disappearances was lacking" (TRIAL 21 June 2012b).

3.2 Explosion of 4 March 2012

Sources state that Colonel Ntsourou and several other military officers were arrested following an explosion in Mpila on 4 March 2012 (RFI 6 Jan. 2013; *Le Monde* 12 Apr. 2012). According to the Parisian newspaper *Le Monde*, the explosion took place in a military ammunitions depot in Mpila, a neighbourhood of Brazzaville (ibid.). According to official figures, the explosion resulted in 282 deaths, more than 2,300 injured and over 14,000 without homes (ibid.). A lawyer of Colonel Ntsourou stated that he was suspected of setting fire to the depot (ibid.). According to Radio France Internationale, in January 2013, Colonel Ntsourou was still detained (RFI 6 Jan. 2013).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'homme (FIDH). December 2005. *Mission d'observation judiciaire du procès des "disparus du Beach."* <<http://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/cg435f-2.pdf>>

Missié, Jean-Pierre. 2008. "Ethnicité et territorialité. Deux modes du vécu identitaire chez les Teke du Congo-Brazzaville." *Cahiers d'études africaines*, n° 192. <http://www.cairn.info/article.php?ID_ARTICLE=CEA_192_0835> [Accessed 30 May 2013]

Le Monde [Paris]. 12 April 2012. Christophe Châtelot. "Congo-Brazzaville : vague d'arrestations de militaires après le drame du 4 mars." <http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2012/04/12/congo-brazzaville-arrestations-de-militaires-apres-l-explosion-du-4-mars_1684206_3212.html> [Accessed 28 May 2013]

Radio France Internationale (RFI). 6 January 2013. "Explosions de Mpila au Congo-Brazzaville : les prévenus réclament leur libération." [Accessed 23 May 2013]

Refugees International (RI). 21 May 2003. Marni Zelnick. "Forgotten People: Republic of Congo (ROC)." <<http://reliefweb.int/report/congo/forgotten-people-republic-congo-roc>> [Accessed 28 May 2013]

_____. N.d. "Who We Are." <<http://refugeesinternational.org/who-we-are>> [Accessed 29 May 2013]

Track Impunity Always (TRIAL). 21 June 2012a. "Marcel Ntsourou : faits." <<http://www.trial-ch.org/fr/ressources/trial-watch/trialwatch/profils/profile/538/action/show/controller/Profile.html>> [Accessed 23 May 2013]

_____. 21 June 2012b. "Marcel Ntsourou : procédures légales." <<http://www.trial-ch.org/fr/ressources/trial-watch/trial-watch/profils/profile/538/action/show/controller/Profile.html>> [Accessed 23 May 2013]

_____. N.d. "TRIAL se présente." <<http://www.trial-ch.org/fr/a-propos-de-trial/trial-se-presente/introduction.html>> [Accessed 23 May 2013]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: A researcher at the Interdisciplinary Research Group on Contemporary Africa (Interdisciplinaire groupe de recherche sur l'Afrique contemporaine, IGRAC) was unable to provide information within the time constraints. Attempts to contact a researcher at the IGRAC, a sociology professor at Université Lille and a

representative from the Congolese Observatory for Human Rights (Observatoire congolais des droits de l'homme) were unsuccessful.

Internet sites, including: Africultures; Afrik.com; Afriques en lutte; Afrol News; AllAfrica.com; Amnesty International; Australia – Refugee Review Tribunal; British Broadcasting Corporation; Cairn.info; Congoinfos.com; Congopage; Congo-Internet; Congo Liberty; *La Conscience*; Conseil pour le développement de la recherche en sciences sociales en Afrique; ecoi.net; Ethno-Net; Factiva; Freedom House; Human Rights Watch; International Crisis Group; *Jeune Afrique*; *La Lettre du Continent*; Médecins sans frontières; Minorities at Risk; Minority Right Group International; *Le Nouvel Observateur*; Œil d'Afrique; Portail national d'information et de conseil sur le Congo Brazzaville; Réseaux francophone de recherche sur les opérations de paix; Slate Afrique; *Star du Congo*; United Nations – High Commissioner for Refugees, Integrated Regional Information Networks, Refworld.

[Tips on how to use this search engine.](#)

[Top of Page](#)

Date modified: 2014-06-11

The attached reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada. The reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.