CHRONOLOGY

1300 (approx.) Rise of Kongo Kingdom around the Congo River mouth and the Luba Kingdom (today’s Katanga, towards Lake Tanganyika)

1482 Explorer Diego Cão arrives at the shore of the Congo River and initiates a period of political, cultural and commercial exchange with Portugal

1500–1600 Portuguese political and economic ambitions in Congo, added to a split in Congolese elites between pro-Portuguese/modernists and anti-colonial/traditionalists create political tensions in the Kingdom

1600–1700 Process of decay and social unrest, ending in the division of the Kongo Kingdom in 1667

1700s Anti-colonial sentiment and a political movement to reunite the kingdom generate a series of movements, of which the most famous is the one led by prophetess Beatriz Kimpa Vita

1876 King Léopold II of Belgium convenes a conference of geographers and explorers as a civilising, scientific and humanitarian mission against slavery, which creates the International African Association

1878 King Léopold and Morton Henry Stanley seal deal to claim Congo as a Belgian colony

1885 Congo is internationally recognised as a Belgian territory at the Berlin Conference. Congo becomes a private territory of King Léopold and is renamed the Congo Free State

1890–1910 Reports of slavery, massacres and maiming raise international concern

1893–94 Germany’s occupation of Rwanda-Burundi provokes the first Burundian migration into South Kivu between 1899 and 1903

1908 The Belgian parliament places Congo under the authority of the Belgian government, renaming the territory as the Belgian Congo
1911–18  First significant migrations of Rwandese population to Congo, settling in North Kivu, in Rutshuru and Masisi, and in South Kivu towards the Itombwe massif

1921  Simon Kimbangu becomes the leader of a prophetic movement in N’Kamba (Bas-Congo), which spreads as a symbol of anti-colonial resistance after his arrest

1937  The Belgian Colonial Administration begins a series of population movements from Ruanda-Urundi to Congo to balance out population numbers in the area

1954  Rwanda’s independence provokes an influx of Tutsi refugees into Congo

1958  Founding of the Mouvement National Congolais – a pro-independence party that later is led by Patrice Lumumba

1959  Several rebellions across the country, arrest of Lumumba and statement of King Baudouin favouring Congolese independence

1960 (January)  Round table in Brussels, with the participation of a recently freed Lumumba, granting independence to Congo

1960 (June)  Lumumba is declared prime minister after national elections

1960 (30 June)  Congo’s independence from Belgium

1960 (July)  Belgian troops’ intervention in Katanga and subsequent secession

1960 (September)  Kasa Vubu dissolves parliament

1961  Lumumba is assassinated after his arrest

1963  Katanga secession ends under UN auspices

1964  Pierre Mulele leads a rebellion starting from Kwilu in Bandundu, followed by Laurent-Désiré Kabila in Uvira

1965  US and Belgium-backed coup d’état by Mobutu

1971  Mobutu renames the DRC as Zaire and starts the Zairianisation process

1985  Nationalisation Law

1990  Mobutu declares the end of the one-party state

1991 (August)  Start of the Conference for National Sovereignty (CNS)

1991 (September)  Pillages

1992 (August)  CNS elects Etienne Tshisekedi (UDPS) as prime minister
Chronology

1992 (December) Mobutu evicts Tshisekedi and the newly appointed government
1993 Bunyamulengue uprising
1994 (April) Rwandan genocide
1996 Start of AFDL War
1997 (April) Angola’s intervention
1997 (20 May) Laurent-Désiré Kabila takes over Kinshasa
1997 (7 September) Mobutu dies of cancer in Morocco’s capital, Rabat
1998 RCD/Africa’s World War
1999 (July) Lusaka Peace Agreement
1999 (November) MONUC is authorised to deploy troops (UN Resolution 1279)
1999 (December) Deployment of South African troops under the OAU
2000 MONUC’s mission is placed under a Chapter VII mandate
2001 Laurent-Désiré Kabila is shot by his bodyguard, Rachidi Kasereka
2002 Sun City Peace Agreement
2003 (June) EU intervention in Ituri
2003 (December) Global and Inclusive Accords – 1+4
2004 General Nkunda and Jules Mutebusi attack Bukavu
2005 National constitutional referendum supports constitutional reform
2006 (July) Creation of CNDP
2006 (30 July) Legislative and presidential elections – 1st round.
2006 (December–early 2007) CNDP – General Nkunda’s troops and FARDC defectors reject electoral results and set up parallel administrations
2007 (January) Kabila and CNDP agree for Nkunda’s troops to undergo ‘mixage’ and to combat the FDLR together
2007 (March) MLC troops confront Kabila supporters in Kinshasa contesting electoral results
2008 (6–23 January) Goma Accords creating the Amani Programme, STAREC, and subsequent UNSSSS – later turned into ISSSS. Joint military operations by Rwanda and the DRC, and MONUC and the DRC, to disarm/expel all remaining national and foreign armed groups
2008 (June) Bemba is arrested for crimes against humanity in the CAR

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Chronology

2009 (January)  FARDC-RDF Umoja Wetu Operation
2009 (March)   FARDC-MONUC Kimya II Operation
2009 (23 March) CNDP-Kabila agreement
2010 (January) FARDC-MONUC Amani Leo Operation is launched
2010 (April)   Commitment of CNDP to end parallel administration
2010 (June)    MONUC becomes MONUSCO, with the main mandate of restoring state authority and protecting civilians
2011           Presidential election gives Kabila a second turn, amid accusations of fraud
2012 (23 March) A series of FARDC defect in North and South Kivu to join a renewed CNDP rebellion – M-23 – principally around Masisi and Rutshuru
2012 (20 November) The M-23 takes Sake and Goma, including the Goma/MONUSCO airport
2013 (24 February) Signature of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region
2013 (18 March)  Bosco Ntaganda surrenders to the US embassy in Kigali
2013 (28 March)  Creation of the Intervention Brigade
2014–15         Several military operations undertaken against LRA and FDLR
2015 (January)  Protests spread after President Joseph Kabila announces that a new population census will be carried out, which implicitly means the extension of his mandate
2015 (2 September) Trial of Bosco Ntaganda opens at the ICC