

## Election Preparations in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Monday, May 16, 2011

Speaker Biographies:

### **Reverend Daniel Mulunda-Nyanga, Chairman, Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), Democratic Republic of Congo**

Pastor Daniel Mulunda-Nyanga, is the current President of the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) of the Democratic Republic of Congo (heretofore Congo), formerly known as the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI). As head of this commission, Pastor Mulunda is tasked with the responsibility of galvanizing the government, opposition, civil society and the people of Congo towards the organization of the country's second set of democratic elections since its independence on June 30, 1960. Pastor Mulunda is no stranger to the political scene in Congo. As the founder and president of PAREC, the Ecumenical Program for Peace and Reconciliation, he has spearheaded several faith-based dialogues to foster dialogue, establish peace, and promote disarmament in the Great Lakes Region, and most notably in Congo.

Pastor Mulunda brings a wealth of experience in conflict resolution and peacemaking to his post at the CENI. The most recent of his efforts include the active role PAREC took in the Sun City Inter-Congolese Dialogue, peace talks that led to the drafting and adoption of the Global and Inclusive Accord in 2005, leading to the end of the five-year war in Congo and the installment of the transitional government. As a result of the Global and Inclusive Accord, former combatant groups were integrated into the transitional government, and the country faced the daunting task of disarming these groups, in order to protect the tenuous peace initiated by the Accord. Pastor Mulunda and a team of PAREC staff and parishioners from his church, the New Methodist Church, initiated four disarmament projects in the north of the Katanga province, in the Kivu provinces and in Kinshasa, the capital city of Congo. The philosophy behind this project was simple: combatants will lay down their weapons if their concerns are heard and if their most basic needs are met. The project was successful and since 2005 PAREC was able to recover 34, 216 weapons of war.

Pastor Mulunda's commitment to peace stems from his training as a pastor and his commitment to the Church. His work with the Church did not begin with the founding of the New Methodist Church in 2004. As representative of the All Africa Conference Churches, a pan-African faith-based organization where he served as Executive Secretary for the Youth Desk from 1988-1994, Regional Representative for West Africa from 1991-1994, and Executive Secretary for International Affairs from 1996-2001, Pastor Mulunda has observed and/or assisted in election preparations in Benin (1993), South Africa (1994), Liberia (1997), Togo (1998), Zimbabwe (2000), Senegal (2000), Kenya (2002) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (2006).

Pastor Mulunda received a bachelor degree in Statistics in 1982 from the Higher Institute of Statistics in Kinshasa, a master's degree in theological studies from Wesley Theological Seminary in 1996, a master's degree in international relations from American University in 1996, and an honorary doctorate degree in Political Science and Public Administration from the National Pedagogical University in Kinshasa in 2010. He currently resides in Kinshasa with his wife, Shimba, and is father to four children.

**Barrie Freeman, Deputy Regional Director, Central and West Africa, National Democratic Institute**

As deputy regional director for Central and West Africa at the National Democratic Institute, Barrie Freeman manages a diverse portfolio of country programs across the region focusing on support to electoral processes, civil society and legislative strengthening, and political party development.

Prior to joining NDI in 2002, Freeman spent approximately 15 years with the U.S. State Department, working in the political, economic, and consular sections of U.S. embassies in Tunisia, Morocco, Lesotho, and Nigeria. During postings in Washington, D.C., she served in the Office of the Inspector General and in the Office of African Analysis as the chief political analyst for Nigeria and other West African countries. While at State, she earned the Department's Meritorious and Superior Honor Awards, as well as a Distinguished Analyst Award.

Freeman has also been a contributing writer to *Freedom in the World*, an annual survey of political rights and civil liberties published by Freedom House, and has served as a consultant to the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Lomé, Togo. A graduate of Tulane University in New Orleans, Freeman earned an M.A. from Georgetown University. She is the Vice-Chair of the Board of Elections for Takoma Park, Maryland and is a co-author of *Transparency and Accountability in Africa's Extractive Industries: The Role of the Legislature*.

**Daniel Laurent, Program Officer, Central Africa, International Foundation for Electoral Systems**

Daniel Laurent is the program officer for Central Africa at the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, and has been managing development projects in Africa since 2002. Since joining IFES in 2008, he has managed democracy and governance projects in Angola, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Malawi. His current portfolio includes projects in the DRC, Chad, and Rwanda.

**Mark L. Schneider, Senior Vice President, International Crisis Group**

Mark Schneider joined the International Crisis Group in spring 2001 as senior vice president and special adviser on Latin America. Schneider's areas of expertise include post-conflict reconstruction and nation-building and U.S. foreign policy in the twenty-first century. He directs the Washington advocacy office, conveying Crisis Group analyses and recommendations to the U.S. Government, as well as the World Bank, Organization of American States, and the Inter-

American Development Bank. With Crisis Group, Schneider has traveled multiple times to Afghanistan and Pakistan; Nigeria, Guinea, Liberia, Kenya, Somaliland, and Ethiopia; the Balkans; Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Haiti. Schneider served as the Director of the Peace Corps from 1999-2001 and as the Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development 1993-1999 for Latin America and the Caribbean. He was the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs from 1977-1979 and a foreign policy advisor to Senator Edward M. Kennedy 1970-1976. He has testified frequently before Congress on conflict issues. He earlier served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in El Salvador.

Schneider received a B.A. in journalism from the University of California-Berkeley, an M.A. in political science from San Jose State University, and an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from American University, Washington College of Law. He was awarded the Bernardo O'Higgins Medal for human rights work and the Gran Cruz, Orden al Merito by Government of Chile, and the George W. Eastman Medal for Public Service from the University of Rochester. He also has lectured at various universities, published articles and essays in academic journals, newspapers, and magazines, and appeared on CNN, NBC, ABC, CBS, NPR, and numerous other radio and television news programs. He is a member of the board of trustees of American University.

### **Jennifer Cooke, Director, CSIS Africa Program**

Jennifer Cooke is director of the CSIS Africa Program, which she joined in 2000. She works on a range of U.S.-Africa policy issues, including security, health, conflict, and democratization. She has written numerous reports, articles, and commentary for a range of U.S. and international publications. With J. Stephen Morrison, she is coeditor of *U.S. Africa Policy beyond the Bush Administration: Critical Challenges for the Obama Administration* (CSIS, 2009), as well as a previous volume *Africa Policy in the Clinton Years: Critical Choices for the Bush Administration* (CSIS, 2001). Previously, she worked for the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, as well as for the National Academy of Sciences with its Office of News and Public Information and its Committee on Human Rights.

Cooke has lived in Côte d'Ivoire and the Central African Republic and speaks French. She earned an M.A. in African studies and international economics from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a B.A. in government from Harvard University.