

# **Rape is Cheaper than Bullets**

## **Sexual Violence as a Method of Warfare: Case Study of the Democratic Republic of Congo**



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## **Declaration against plagiarism<sup>1</sup>**

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**Rape is Cheaper than Bullets. Sexual Violence as a Method of Warfare:  
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## **Abstract**

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), women and girls are systematically kidnapped, raped, mutilated and tortured by soldiers from both foreign militias and State security forces. The aim of this thesis is to unravel the reasons why sexual violence in the DRC continues unabated with such horrendous brutality and immense prevalence despite its clear prohibition in International Law and the official end of the conflict in 2003. It will be argued that sexual violence against Congolese women and girls persists because the different actors use it as an effective method of warfare in their struggle for economic and political power. Sexual violence is applied strategically and tactically to advance specific objectives such as to enhance a soldier's conception of power, superiority and masculinity, to be part of a strategy of ethnic cleansing, to humiliate and terrorize the targeted population, to revenge and punish as well as to destroy the entire society and culture by inflicting trauma and terror. These concepts of sexual violence as a method of warfare will be related to the incidents in the DRC in order to generate an analytical framework for the investigation of the persistence of sexual violence. Legal, political, societal and institutional factors will also be included in the analysis in order to have a holistic approach towards the subject.

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