

“CONGO STORIES”

As Historic Elections Loom in DR Congo, New Book Details Unparalleled History of International Exploitation, Greed, and Heroism

December 4, 2018 – Out today, the new book "[CONGO STORIES: Battling Five Centuries of Exploitation and Greed](#)," coauthored by Enough Project Founding Director John Prendergast and Congolese activist Fidel Bafilemba, featuring photographs by Ryan Gosling, arrives at a critical moment. The Democratic Republic of Congo, which has suffered the deadliest war since World War II, faces a crucial month with hotly contested elections scheduled two days before Christmas.

The authors are donating 100 percent of their proceeds to create a Congo Stories Upstander Fund, which will provide support to many of the Congolese heroes profiled in the book in their efforts to create a better future for Congo.

In developing the book, Bafilemba, Prendergast, and Ryan Gosling traveled to Congo to document stories about how the people and vast natural resources of that country over the last five centuries have been used to build, advance, and safeguard the United States and Europe -- and how today, Congolese heroes are reshaping that history.

The authors profile Congolese heroes like 2018 Nobel Peace Prize winner Dr. Denis Mukwege, all of whom are battling against a tidal wave of corruption, violence, and exploitation on a scale with few parallels in the world.

Through Gosling's photographs of Congolese daily life, Bafilemba's profiles of heroic Congolese activists, and Prendergast's narratives of the extraordinary history of exploitation and evolving social movements that directly link Congo with the United States and Europe, “CONGO STORIES” provides windows into the history, the people, the challenges, the possibilities, and the movements that could change the course of Congo's destiny. [Click here to read excerpts](#).

[Special events](#) featuring the authors will take place in San Francisco on December 7, Los Angeles on December 10, Washington, D.C. on December 13, and New York on December 14.

ADVANCE PRAISE:

- “CONGO STORIES” has been selected as an Amazon Editors’ Book of the Month selection for December 2018 in three categories.
- "In this well-organized, vigorously informative, polyphonic, unnerving, and conscience-rousing presentation, [Prendergast] and researcher and activist Bafilemba trace 'the connection between natural resources exploitation and the violent conflicts' destroying the lives of millions in the Democratic Republic of Congo ... A thoughtfully assembled

resource and a clarion call for readers to seek out ethically sourced goods and support efforts to bring justice and peace to this cruelly pillaged land."

- **Booklist**

- "Eye-opening reportage from an African nation that has been robbed and despoiled for centuries-but that is now finding paths of resistance ... No thoughtful reader of this book will look at his or her computer or cellphone the same way again." – **Kirkus**

COMMENT FROM THE AUTHORS AND CONTRIBUTORS:

"Wealthy commercial interests from outside the country—including human traffickers, kings, colonists, presidents, tycoons, bankers, mining magnates, arms dealers, mineral smugglers, elephant poachers, and military leaders—have colluded with Congolese leaders to loot the country of its greatest resources... By following the money and greed, we tell the story of how major global events have driven huge surges in demand for Congo's riches—from colonial plantation agriculture to the advent of the automobile, from the Industrial Revolution to World Wars I and II and the Cold War, to the dramatic expansion of the global weapons trade, the rise of cell phones and laptops, and the mass marketing of electric and hybrid cars."

--- John Prendergast and Fidel Bafilemba

"Many want to help but don't know where to start. The book will link you to a vast network of Congolese and friends of Congo who unite to build awareness, change policy, and support local initiatives. Be part of the story, be part of the change."

--- Soraya Aziz Souleymane

"We were told many personal stories by many people, but a central theme emerged. It was one of an unwavering refusal to be silenced or broken. It's hard for me to imagine being able to move on after the horrors many of them have experienced. However, they have gone beyond moving on. To have the strength to take those nightmares and use them as fuel to make the hopes and dreams of their families and country a reality is the definition of heroic."

--- Ryan Gosling

"Seek out the changemakers and commit your support directly. Buy something that's ethically sourced and made. Such an action, so easy to accomplish in our interconnected world, is a humane and even intimate way to state your rejection of a history of soulless corporate exploitation. You do have this power. Don't ever think that you don't."

--- Dave Eggers

"Women in particular pay the heaviest price of these repeated wars, disasters, and violence. Strong and enduring, they have always fought for the survival of the community and never have given up. They never gave up working, never gave up taking care of their family. They even never gave up smiling! And that is the foundation of my hope."

--- Chouchou Namegabe



MORE INFORMATION:

CONGO STORIES: *Battling Five Centuries of Exploitation and Greed*

By John Prendergast and Fidel Bafilemba

Foreword by Soraya Aziz Souleymane

Postscript by Dave Eggers

Afterword by Chouchou Namegabe

Illustrations by Sam Ilus

Photographs by Ryan Gosling

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ABOUT THE BOOK'S CONTRIBUTORS:

COAUTHORS

Fidel Bafilemba is a Congolese field researcher who coordinates a civil society network called GATT-RN.

John Prendergast is a New York Times bestselling author who founded and runs both the Enough Project and the Sentry.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Ryan Gosling is an actor and filmmaker.

FOREWORD

Soraya Aziz Souleymane is a Congolese development specialist.

POSTSCRIPT

Dave Eggers is a writer and co-founder of the International Congress of Youth Voices.

AFTERWORD

Chouchou Namegabe is a Congolese journalist.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Sam Ilus is a Congolese artist.

ADDITIONAL CONTENT

Sasha Lezhnev is a Congo analyst.

Annie Callaway is a human rights advocate.

Dr. Namegabe Murhbazi is a Congolese children's rights advocate.

Holly Dranginis is a human rights lawyer and policy analyst.



For more book information, reviews, book tour events, updates and news, visit CongoStories.org.

For media inquiries or interview requests, please contact: Greg Hittelman, Director of Communications, +1 310 717 0606, gh@enoughproject.org

About THE ENOUGH PROJECT

The Enough Project supports peace and an end to mass atrocities in Africa's deadliest conflict zones. Together with its investigative initiative The Sentry, Enough counters armed groups, violent kleptocratic regimes, and their commercial partners that are sustained and enriched by corruption, criminal activity, and the trafficking of natural resources. By helping to create consequences for the major perpetrators and facilitators of atrocities and corruption, Enough seeks to build leverage in support of peace and good governance. Enough conducts research in conflict zones, engages governments and the private sector on potential policy solutions, and mobilizes public campaigns focused on peace, human rights, and breaking the links between war and illicit profit. Learn more – and join us – at www.EnoughProject.org.