

Dem. Rep. Congo: Tensions persist after Kabila's contested re-election at presidential polls

- > **Event:** The presidential poll of 28 November, won by incumbent Kabila with almost 49% of the votes against 32% for his main contender Etienne Tshisekedi, was heavily criticised for irregularities and lack of transparency. Although the international community and its independent monitors voiced their disappointment, they did not claim the irregularities to be sufficient to review the outcome. Tshisekedi rejected the biased Supreme Court's inauguration of Kabila by proclaiming his own presidential inauguration and encouraging his supporters to arrest Kabila. The inauguration was held at Tshisekedi's home after tanks had been deployed at the Kinshasa stadion to prevent opposition supporters from attending the public ceremony. In Kinshasa, the opposition stronghold, an estimated 20,000 government soldiers are set to oppress any kind of protest, which is probably why domestic demonstrations have been limited. Though Human Rights Watch accuses the security forces of having killed 24 people and arbitrarily detained many more since the presidential election, no massive clashes have been reported so far between opposition and government forces.
- > **Impact on country risk:** Vote counting for the legislative election, concurrently held on 28 November, has been suspended by the electoral commission until international experts arrive to assist in the process. This could lead to deeper international criticism or inflame opposition protests, but it could also give the opposition a voice in Parliament. The situation will require close monitoring in the upcoming weeks and months to see whether political risk will deteriorate. For now, ONDD will stick to its restrictive cover policy on the DRC. (**analyst:** Louise Van Cauwenbergh, l.vancauwenbergh@ondd.be)