

STARRING  
**SOCO INTERNATIONAL**  
A COMPANY FEATURED ON  
**THE LONDON STOCK EXCHANGE**



global witness

HOW SECRET PAYMENTS  
AND A CLIMATE OF VIOLENCE  
HELPED SOCO INTERNATIONAL  
OPEN AFRICA'S OLDEST  
NATIONAL PARK TO OIL

GLOBAL WITNESS  
PRESENTS

# DRILLERS IN THE MIST

A STORY ABOUT SOCO INTERNATIONAL'S QUEST FOR OIL IN VIRUNGA NATIONAL PARK, A WORLD HERITAGE SITE, THE COMPANY AND ITS CONTRACTORS MADE ILLICIT PAYMENTS APPEAR TO HAVE PAID OFF ARMED REBELS AND BENEFITTED FROM FEAR AND VIOLENCE FOSTERED BY GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES IN EASTERN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO OPPONENTS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED BEATEN AND STABBED BY GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES IDENTIFIED AS WORKING ALONGSIDE THE COMPANY SOCO HAS RAISED MONEY WITH HELP FROM ITS MANY SHAREHOLDERS, INCLUDING UK PENSION FUNDS

18 INCLUDES SECRET PAYMENTS AND VIOLENCE  
SOME MATERIAL MAY BE HIGHLY INAPPROPRIATE

EVIDENCE FROM SECRET RECORDINGS

VISIT [WWW.GLOBALWITNESS.ORG/VIRUNGA](http://WWW.GLOBALWITNESS.ORG/VIRUNGA)



SEPTEMBER 2014



Butembo

**BLOCK 4**

**DEMOCRATIC  
REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

Lake Edward

Nyakakoma

Kanyabayonga

Vitshumbi

**BLOCK 5  
(Soco International)**




**UGANDA**

Rumangabo

Goma

**RWANDA**

Lake Kivu

-  Virunga National Park
-  Other Protected Areas
-  Albertne Rift Oil Blocks
-  Mountain gorilla habitat, 2003 census

# DRILLERS IN THE MIST: HOW SECRET PAYMENTS AND A CLIMATE OF VIOLENCE HELPED SOCO INTERNATIONAL OPEN AFRICA'S OLDEST NATIONAL PARK TO OIL

- Opponents of London-listed Soco International in Congo arrested, beaten and stabbed by government security forces identified as supporting the company
- Military intelligence officer working alongside Soco offered bribes to park ranger to spy on head of Virunga National Park, home to the world's last mountain gorillas
- Soco made payments to Congolese MP to lobby for access to Virunga under a murky 'consultancy' arrangement
- Armed rebels appear to have received cash from company 'subcontractors'

London-listed company Soco and its contractors have made illicit payments, appear to have paid off armed rebels and benefited from fear and violence fostered by government security forces in eastern Congo, as they sought access to Africa's oldest national park for oil exploration.

Material gathered as part of an undercover investigation by UK film-makers and reviewed by Global Witness, lays bare the extent of the acts carried out by Soco International plc – one of the UK's 200 largest companies – and its supporters to further its oil project in the Democratic Republic of Congo's Virunga National Park, which is a world heritage site.<sup>1</sup> Only some of the undercover footage was included in a new documentary called "Virunga". Soco has said in a public statement that it "[does not condone, partake in or tolerate corrupt or illegal activity whatsoever](#)."<sup>2</sup>

Soco has yet to find oil in the park. Following sustained pressure from campaigners, it pledged on 11 June that, after completing seismic testing, it would not "undertake or commission any exploratory or other drilling within Virunga National Park unless Unesco and the DRC government agree that such activities are not incompatible with its World Heritage status". The ambiguity of Soco's position leaves the door open to the park being fully or partly declassified for oil.

This was underlined by a report in the *Times* on the day of the announcement, where Soco Deputy CEO Roger Cagle said Congo and Unesco could agree to redraw Virunga's boundaries.<sup>3</sup>

The video and audio recordings were collected by a court-appointed investigator, community activists and French freelance journalist Mélanie Gouby. The footage shows a Soco ally trying to bribe a senior park ranger to spy on the head of Virunga, local Soco agents handing out envelopes of cash to villagers to hold a demonstration, and a top Congolese parks official telling rangers they "will be paid money, money, money" if they collaborate with the company. Soco officials, meanwhile, labelled the head of the park, Emmanuel de Merode, as their major obstacle in secret recordings, and denigrated the park. Its operations supervisor in Congo said the world heritage site was "just a fucking mine".

Activists and park rangers in Nyakakoma have been arrested, and in some cases beaten or stabbed, by soldiers and intelligence agents after criticising or obstructing Soco's operations. Several of these cases have recently been [documented independently by Human Rights Watch](#), which has called on Congolese authorities "to make sure that people are safe when they try to uphold the law, protect the park, and peacefully express their views". Soco has said it is not connected to the incidents

detailed by Human Rights Watch and that [its initial investigations "have not found the allegations raised to be substantiated or justified"](#).

In one exchange recorded by Gouby, a Soco official and contractor appear to admit the company has paid money to Congolese rebels. Brutal rebel groups have terrorised civilians and engaged in elephant poaching and illegal charcoal trading in Virunga. The dangers run by rangers seeking to protect the park were starkly illustrated by the attempted assassination of de Merode in April 2014 by unknown gunmen.

The company also made monthly payments to an influential MP in the region – an arrangement that merits further investigation for possible violations of bribery laws. The MP – now a government minister – said that he was "compensated" by Soco for his work and described himself as a consultant to the company. He represented an area including the town of Nyakakoma, where Soco has its Congolese base camp.

### GLOBAL WITNESS IS CALLING ON:

- Soco International to launch a full, independent investigation and commit not to explore within the current boundaries of Virunga;
- Soco to also publish documents related to its Virunga project, including a secretive 2011 agreement with the national parks authority, following which the authority reversed its opposition to Soco entering the park;
- Investors to pressure Soco to commit to no oil activity within the current boundaries of Virunga, launch a full independent investigation and publish all relevant documents;
- UK and US anti-corruption authorities to examine the evidence of bribery, and determine whether the company has acted illegally.

Soco said in a statement to Global Witness that it "operates in accordance with the UK Bribery Act 2010 and any allegation to the contrary is categorically denied". It said the *Virunga* film "contains multiple inaccuracies and many entirely false statements [concerning the company's operations](#)". Soco would "investigate thoroughly and deal with each and every incident" if there was evidence of wrongdoing, it added.

## VIRUNGA – A WORLD HERITAGE SITE IN DANGER

Virunga National Park, which lies on the equator in eastern Congo, covers an area almost three times the size of Luxembourg. It contains savannah, rainforest, lava-spewing volcanoes and most of one of Africa's great lakes. Lake Edward's fish support more than 30,000 people but the park's most famous residents are some 220 critically endangered mountain gorillas – a quarter of the total global population.<sup>4</sup> As a world heritage site, Virunga officially enjoys the same level of protection as the Yellowstone National Park and the Great Barrier Reef.

But as easier-to-tap oil supplies have dwindled, the push into more remote areas has brought two European oil firms to Virunga. The French giant Total and London Stock Exchange-listed Soco International have been granted oil exploration rights to vast areas that overlap the park. To head off criticism, [Total announced in 2013](#) that it would not explore for oil inside Virunga's current boundaries even if these were to be moved.<sup>5</sup> Faced with opposition from western governments, UN agencies and conservationists, Soco made a commitment in June – in a joint-statement with the WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) – which falls far short of Total's unequivocal stance.

That announcement on 11 June was the result of a mediation process stemming from WWF's complaint against Soco to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In addition to its pledge not to start new oil activities inside Virunga without agreement between Unesco and the Congolese government, the company committed not to operate in "any other world heritage site".<sup>6</sup>

## SOCO'S PAST: CORRUPTION CLAIMS AND THE AXIS OF EVIL

Soco was registered in the UK in 1997, when Texan oil-man Ed Story brought in an old business partner, Roger Cagle, to help float the company on the London Stock Exchange.<sup>9</sup>

The company has often gone where others fear to tread. Outside central Africa, it has operated at the frontier of the oil sector in countries including Libya, North Korea and Vietnam.<sup>10</sup> "We didn't concentrate on the Axis of Evil," Story told a British newspaper in 2008. "It just worked out that way for a while. We go to a lot of strange places. We like to be there first and define the terms rather than take someone else's."<sup>11</sup>

In 1999, two years after the float, a group of investors took a 25% stake in the company and joined the board.<sup>12</sup> Patrick Maugein, a friend of former French President Jacques Chirac, became Soco's chairman, and Rui de Sousa, a Portuguese oil trader, a director.<sup>13</sup> Maugein and de Sousa – who became Chairman after the former's death in 2006 – helped orientate Soco towards oil fields in French-speaking Africa.<sup>14</sup> When Soco set up its Africa office, Maugein brought in another Frenchman to head up its operations – Serge Lescaut, who worked in oil in Iraq from 1998 to 2003.<sup>15</sup>

After buying into Soco, Maugein and de Sousa became embroiled in corruption allegations surrounding Iraq's UN-supervised "oil-for-food" programme, which was intended to alleviate the effects of sanctions on Iraqi civilians but was used

as a cash cow by Saddam Hussein's regime. Both men were reported to have been given lucrative oil allocations by Iraq. De Sousa was linked by an official inquiry and an investigative report in the *Wall Street Journal* to the smuggling of over 400,000 barrels of oil out of Iraq in 2001 in contravention of UN sanctions.<sup>16</sup> The authoritative Volcker report on the scandal said that Saddam's government illegally earned €9.4 million from the scheme.

Maugein told the *Wall Street Journal* at the time that his dealings in Iraq "were conducted in a perfectly legal manner". De Sousa said that he simply "went [to Iraq] to discuss potential investments" and that the corruption scandal was "a big hypocrisy".<sup>17</sup>

Similarly, Soco's first acquisition in central Africa in 2005 – the offshore Marine XI block in Congo Brazzaville – was mired in controversy. A private company Africa Oil and Gas Corporation (AOGC) was awarded a 10% stake as part of the deal. A UK court found that AOGC was secretly set up by a presidential advisor, who as head of the state oil company was in charge of overseeing the bidding process for the block.<sup>18</sup> Maugein and de Sousa also held a stake in the block through an offshore company.<sup>19</sup>

These allegations against Soco board members have not prevented the company from receiving accolades in the business press. The *Times* said in September 2013 that its shares are "a good long-term punt", while more recently investment banks BMO Capital Markets and RBC Capital gave it an "outperform" rating.<sup>20</sup>

WWF, meanwhile, has agreed to stop pursuing its OECD complaint and has declared "victory for our planet and for good practices in business".<sup>7</sup>

The deal, however, allowed Soco to complete a seismic survey inside Virunga to gather data on the park's oil potential. Virunga could still be drilled under the agreement if the park is declassified or its boundaries are shifted. Indeed, Soco's Deputy Chief

Executive Roger Cagle has indicated his support for such an arrangement, telling the *Times* newspaper that the agreement "forces DRC and Unesco to come to some kind of accommodation".

Soco has also been at pains to tell investors and the Congolese authorities that its agreement with WWF did not signal the company was withdrawing from Virunga. For example, Soco's Congo country

chief José Sangwa wrote to Prime Minister Augustin Matata Ponyo on 11 June 2014 that news of our "disengagement from oil exploration activities in Virunga National Park... is inaccurate". Soco would process its oil exploration data by mid-2015, he said, and that would allow the Congolese authorities to decide on whether to push ahead with oil operations or not.

Beyond the looming threat to Virunga, major questions remain about how Soco opened up Virunga to oil exploration and countered opposition with the help of some dubious allies.

### **A deal to unlock the park**

Soco was set up and is still led by Ed Story, a 70-year-old Texan oil man with a penchant for playing elephant polo. From small beginnings in 1991, as an offshoot of Fort Worth-based Snyder Oil Corporation, it has grown to be one of the 200 largest British public companies, with annual revenues of over \$600 million.<sup>8</sup> Along the way, company officers have courted controversy for links to corruption and Soco has been criticised for its focus on some of the world's most dictatorial regimes (see box: Soco's past).

In early 2011, the company's bid to find oil in eastern Congo seemed to be falling apart. The

year before, the company's oil rights for Block 5 were ratified by Congo's President.<sup>21</sup> Now Congo's environment ministry had suspended its plans to begin exploration and national park authorities were arguing that oil exploration was illegal (see box: The legality of oil exploration in Virunga). Over half of Block 5 lies within Virunga.

In February that year a run-in with Virunga's rangers entrenched these divisions. According to the General Manager of the Congolese national parks authority (the ICCN) a team of Soco officials accompanied by a local MP and 12 soldiers "forced" their way into the park, despite being forbidden entry by rangers guarding a barrier.<sup>22</sup> It was the latest in a series of disputes with park authorities, who allege Soco had repeatedly entered the park illegally and offered bribes to a park ranger.<sup>23</sup>

Cosma Wilungula, the ICCN's General Manager, made a formal complaint to the local public prosecutor, calling for a "preventative measure forbidding Soco personnel access to the park".<sup>24</sup> He said that exploring for oil in the park was illegal under Congolese law and violated international accords that Congo had signed.

Soco acknowledged that it had entered the park accompanied by the MP but argued that

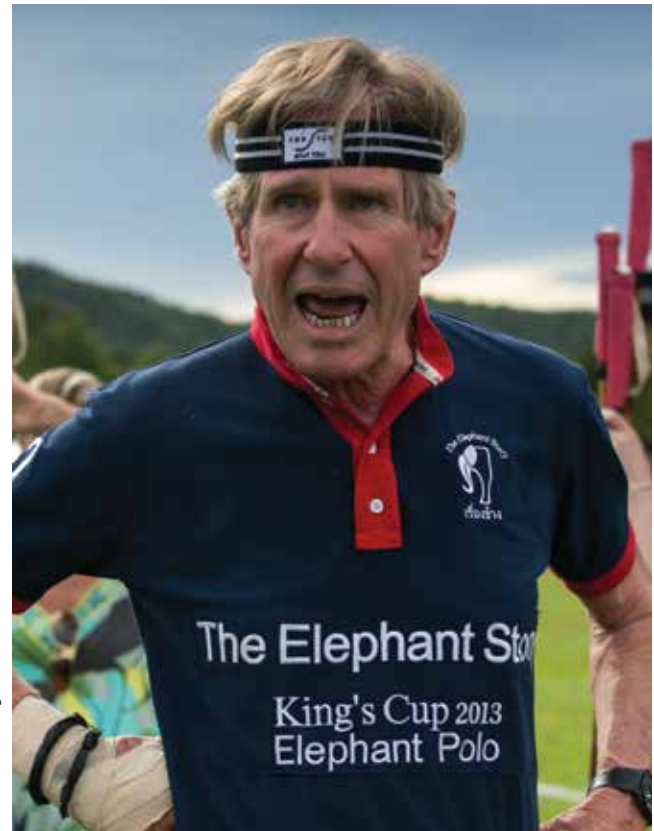


Photo by Brent Stirton/Getty Images for WWF-Canon

Virunga is home to a quarter of the world's remaining mountain gorillas.



AP Photo/David Longstreath



Getty Images/Paula Bronstein

Soco's CEO, Ed Story (right), enjoys the thrill of elephant polo when he's not in the boardroom.

it had permission, saying Wilungula's version was "[blatantly false](#)" and that it was in the park conducting an environmental assessment.<sup>25</sup>

To make matters worse for the company, in March 2011 Congo's Environment Minister, José Endundo, rejected the environmental assessment by Soco as "[premature](#)" and "[superficial](#)".<sup>26</sup> He said a further assessment was needed before oil exploration could proceed.

In a letter to the Prime Minister that month Endundo joined the ICCN in accusing Soco of forcing its way into the park. He said that Soco's oil contract "posed a problem" and that "any violation of the integrity of Virunga National Park... would lead to the decline not only of this park" but also of Congo's four other national parks recognised as world heritage sites.<sup>27</sup> He said this was not solely the position of the environment ministry but was the "clear and unambiguous position of the relevant texts".

Then, in May 2011,<sup>28</sup> Soco signed an agreement with the ICCN.<sup>29</sup> The existence of the deal was kept secret at the time, even from the Virunga authorities – based in the park at Rumangabo, 900 miles east of the ICCN's Kinshasa headquarters.<sup>30</sup>

Soco later said it gave them the right to enter Virunga "for the purposes of [carrying out scientific studies](#)" in return for a fee to the ICCN "to monitor our activities... and contribute towards the cost of providing rangers".<sup>31</sup> It is not known how much Soco paid under the agreement.<sup>32</sup>

A later 2013 deal between the two commits Soco to pay \$180,000 a year, as well as a one-off payment of \$150,000 for development projects to the parks authority.<sup>33</sup>

In the year after the May 2011 Soco-ICCN agreement, relations improved and by April 2012 the ICCN's Wilungula wrote to Soco saying the ICCN will "ensure that you and your teams... can enter Virunga National Park for all useful purposes".<sup>34</sup> He said the ICCN "supports wholeheartedly" Soco's aim of "reconciling the conservation of the unique and irreplaceable biodiversity of [Virunga]... with oil exploration".<sup>35</sup>

The environment minister Endundo granted Soco a permit for aerial surveys over its block<sup>36</sup> but resisted pressure from the oil ministry to give more far-reaching rights.<sup>37</sup> In March 2012 he removed a key Soco ally from a committee monitoring the oil issue.<sup>38</sup> Endundo lost his ministerial position later

that month – it is not known whether it was in connection with his stance on Virunga.

The agreement with Soco led to a split in the national parks authority between those willing to collaborate and those determined to shield Virunga from oil exploration. De Merode and his team in Rumangabo were left isolated.

De Merode, a 44-year-old Belgian conservationist who grew up in Kenya and the UK, was brought in by the Congolese government to manage Virunga's team of about 300 ICCN park rangers in 2008.<sup>39</sup> He also sits on the board of the Virunga Foundation, which has a ten-year contract to manage the park alongside the ICCN. His appointment allowed Virunga National Park to restore its reputation following an international scandal that saw its previous director charged with complicity in the illegal charcoal trade and the [killings of several](#)

[mountain gorillas](#).<sup>40</sup> The former director, Honoré Mashagiro, was later released for lack of evidence but the events surrounding his arrest marked one of the lowest points in the park's history.

Under de Merode's leadership, the park has bounced back from years of neglect. A hydro-electric plant has been built for local people and tourists have started visiting the mountain gorillas again, earning revenues of over \$1 million in 2010 and 2011 combined.<sup>41</sup> The turbulent history of the area, still dotted with rebel groups, makes the rangers' jobs dangerous and sometimes deadly: 130 park rangers have been killed in the park since 1996.<sup>42</sup>

Despite the about-turn of the national parks authority and the environment ministry in Kinshasa, Soco still had to contend with opposition in and around Virunga – from the park's management under de Merode, as well as from activists and fishermen.

## THE LEGALITY OF OIL EXPLORATION IN VIRUNGA

Oil exploration or production in Virunga National Park is illegal under Congo's 2011 Environment Law and its [1969 Nature Conservation Law](#), which says that land in national parks, "cannot be transferred or placed under concessions".<sup>43</sup>

A new Nature Conservation Law superseded the 1969 text in February 2014. It declares "null any right granted within the boundaries of protected areas".<sup>44</sup> However, the law says "scientific research" and activities in the "public interest" may be permitted by a decree from the Council of Ministers where the activity is not detrimental to flora and fauna.<sup>45</sup> Soco has not received such a decree. Although Soco has received presidential and ministerial decrees authorising them to explore for oil, these are of lower legal value than Congolese law.

In addition, Virunga is protected as a world heritage site and the committee that governs these sites has stressed "[the incompatibility of petroleum exploration and exploitation with World Heritage status](#)". It has called on Congo to cancel the permit.<sup>46</sup>

Soco "denies that their operations in the park are illegal and states that it is committed to abiding by international and national law".<sup>47</sup> When faced with the allegations of illegality, it said that "the only planned activity continues to be the scientific studies... No drilling has been planned or is warranted at this stage."<sup>48</sup> But the work programme in Soco's Production Sharing Contract contradicts this, committing the company [to drilling two exploration wells](#).<sup>49</sup>

In a meeting on 29 May 2014 with Global Witness (before Soco's joint announcement with WWF) a spokesperson for the company said that after interpreting the seismic data – which would not be completed until October 2014 at the earliest – the terms of the contract allow the company to pull out for commercial reasons: "That is our safety net."

The government of the UK, where Soco is headquartered, has said it "opposes oil exploration within Virunga National Park" and has urged "the Government of DR Congo to fully respect the international conventions to which it is a signatory".<sup>50</sup> The Belgian, German and European parliaments have all passed resolutions critical of oil exploration in the park.<sup>51</sup>



# CHARACTERS

## Soco and its subcontractors

- **Ed Story** – Soco's Texan CEO, he started the company in 1991
- **Roger Cagle** – Soco's co-founder and Deputy CEO, based in London
- **Rui de Sousa** – Chairman of Soco since 2006, he also owns a stake in the Virunga project
- **Patrick Maugein** – an oil trader and Soco Chairman from 1999 until his death in 2006
- **Serge Lescaut** – Soco's Africa director based in Pointe-Noire, Congo Brazzaville
- **José Sangwa** – head of Soco's Congo office, based in Kinshasa
- **Julien Lechenault** – Soco's Field Operations Supervisor in eastern Congo, who left the company in September 2013
- **Pieter Wright** – one of Soco's security contractors working for Specialised Security Consultants (SSC)
- **"John"** – as yet unidentified consultant who worked for Soco, filmed undercover by Mélanie Gouby

## The freelance journalist

- **Mélanie Gouby** – a French freelance journalist who secretly filmed Soco employees

## Soco's friends

- **Célestin Vunabandi** – MP for an area of eastern Congo covering much of Soco's oil block and now a minister. He worked as a consultant for Soco
- **Major Burimbi Feruzi** – an intelligence officer and Soco's point-man in the Congolese army.
- **Guy Mbayma** – Soco's point-man in the Congolese national parks authority (the ICCN) until his recent dismissal
- **The Mwami (Chief) Ndeze** – the powerful local chief of Bwisha, a wide area including Soco's base camp at the lakeside village of Nyakakoma
- **Kamari Birahira** – a top aide to the Mwami Ndeze in Nyakakoma

## Congo's environment officials and Virunga rangers

- **José Endundo** – Congo's environment minister from 2007 to 2012
- **Cosma Wilungula** – General Manager of the Congolese national park's authority (ICCN), which manages sites including Virunga
- **Emmanuel de Merode** – Virunga's chief warden since 2008. A Belgian conservationist who survived an attempted assassination in April 2014
- **Rodrigue Katembo** – chief warden of Virunga's central sector

# 1. ILLICIT PAYMENTS AND OFFERS OF BRIBES: OVERCOMING RESISTANCE OF VIRUNGA PARK RANGERS

Four powerful local figures have advanced Soco's interests in Virunga.

## The army major – Feed us information secretly and you could get \$3,000

The first was Major Burimbi Feruzi, a Congolese army intelligence officer assigned to Soco as a "Military Liaison Officer".<sup>52</sup> Undercover recordings show that he tried to smooth Soco's way into the park through bribery and he referred to a Soco security contractor as his "boss".

Feruzi was first filmed undercover in May 2013 by senior park ranger Rodrigue Katembo, whose authority covered Nyakakoma, the town housing Soco's base camp. Two-and-a-half years earlier the provincial High Court of North Kivu had mandated Katembo to investigate Soco's activities in Virunga.<sup>53</sup>



"This means we are buying you": Soco's point-man in Congo's army offered bribes to a senior ranger

Katembo - who features in the film *Virunga* - put on a concealed microphone and a button-hole camera, gathering information that was submitted to North Kivu's public prosecutor in April 2014.

At the May 2013 meeting Feruzi offered Katembo money to spy on de Merode, saying that he was looking for "an accomplice on the inside".

"We are trying to gauge Emmanuel [de Merode's] position. Is he plotting behind our backs or is he planning an ambush?" said Feruzi. "While we are working together, you might hear something and you should inform us."<sup>54</sup>

"This means we are buying you," said Feruzi, laughing. "After buying you, you accept to collaborate with us; and then they will be in the position to give you whatever you are asking for."<sup>55</sup>

When the subject of money comes up, Katembo asked, "Then you are saying I could ask for...", but Feruzi interrupts him: "three thousand [dollars]".<sup>56</sup> By western standards this may not be much of a bribe but for a Congolese park ranger it's a year-and-a-half's wages - they earn just \$165 per month.<sup>57</sup>

Feruzi wanted Katembo to meet Soco's security contractors, Specialised Security Consultants (SSC). "They are the ones who design all the plans and tell Soco everything... I myself work with them".<sup>58</sup>

In July 2013 the meeting took place. In more undercover video footage, Feruzi can be seen introducing Katembo to a white South African: "Mr Pieter Wright. He's my boss. He is a security adviser in the company Soco", the Major said. The three men discussed finding reliable rangers to collaborate with Soco in the park and at the end of the meeting Katembo was handed an envelope with \$50: "just to say thank you", Pieter Wright said.<sup>59</sup>

"Bribes' to park rangers have never been nor will ever be sanctioned by Soco," the company has said.<sup>60</sup>

In a written statement published on 24 April 2014 Soco denied "any knowledge of the security contractor filmed making a payment and does not in any way condone his actions".<sup>61</sup> However, in a meeting with Global Witness on 29 May a Soco spokesperson said, "We think we know who he is".



virungamovie.com

Pieter Wright, a Soco security contractor, told a ranger that an envelope of cash was “just to say thank you”

An official from SSC's sister company Demining Enterprises International, contacted by phone by Global Witness, said that Wright was key to Soco's security arrangements, sharing his job with Soco's main security adviser in eastern Congo, Pieter Kock.<sup>62</sup> Bossie Boshoff, Operations Manager at DEI said: “Pieter Kock is operations manager in Block 5. He works back-to-back with Pieter Wright - they have the same job. One does two weeks then the other does two weeks.”

Soco has acknowledged Major Feruzi is the company's Military Liaison Officer – their point-man in the Congolese army. However, it did not answer questions about Feruzi in [an email from Global Witness sent on 27 May 2014](#), including “Has Major Feruzi offered to pay people on behalf of Soco?”

Speaking about the secret footage showing Feruzi's attempt at bribing Katembo, Soco's spokesperson said that “the evidence that has come out of the film has shocked us”, adding that an investigation is underway which would result in a “bigger answer” from the company and unspecified action. “He hasn't received money from us,” the spokesperson said. “We wouldn't allow that and the books haven't revealed that he has.”

### **The park official – Work with Soco and get “money, money, money” or be fired**

The second official lobbying for Soco was Guy Mbayma, until recently the Technical and Scientific Director<sup>63</sup> at the national parks authority and Soco's official “focal point” with the organisation.<sup>64</sup>

In March 2012 he was filmed speaking to Virunga's rangers lined up in formation.

In a speech that wove together French, Swahili and Lingala, one of Congo's national languages, he said that rangers who worked on the “inside team” with the company “will get money, money, money, are you gonna refuse that?”<sup>65</sup>

“When a girl will see you with money, don't you think she will love you? ... [And] your kids will be able to go to school, that's true. And then people will start praising you and calling you 'tonton' [uncle]”.<sup>66</sup>

If the rangers objected to oil exploration in the park, Mbayma told them, “you will be fired, I will sign your dismissal right this minute”.<sup>67</sup>

Mbayma had funds to back up his promises. His boss, Cosma Wilungula, told Global Witness that Soco paid money directly to Mbayma, rather than to the ICCN centrally, after the company signed its May 2011 agreement with the parks authority. The work on the ground "was all coordinated by Guy Mbayma," Wilungula said, "I don't know how much Soco gave him".

De Merode said that several rangers did receive money from Soco.

"I was made aware that some of my staff had received financial benefits in 2011 to 2014 from the said company, but this was done without my consent. Nor was I ever informed of the functions that they were asked to fulfil. In return for these payments," he said.

Mbayma has also threatened local NGOs who oppose oil drilling. In an open letter in October 2013, he claimed that such NGOs may "perhaps create new armed groups" and called for the Minister of Planning, Céléstin Vunabandi, to put together a list of approved groups.<sup>68</sup>

Soco did not answer Global Witness's questions about Mbayma, including "What payments and

benefits – if any" Soco gave to him, directly or indirectly.

The head of Soco's office in Congo, José Sangwa, said that the ICCN's "Technical and Scientific Director" (clearly referring to Mbayma) has "worked a lot" to improve relations between the two organisations. "He [Mbayma] manages all the rangers, all the people there [Virunga Park]. He has an impact when he goes to the field. He gives instructions, he guides," Sangwa told Gouby in Kinshasa in November 2013.<sup>69</sup>

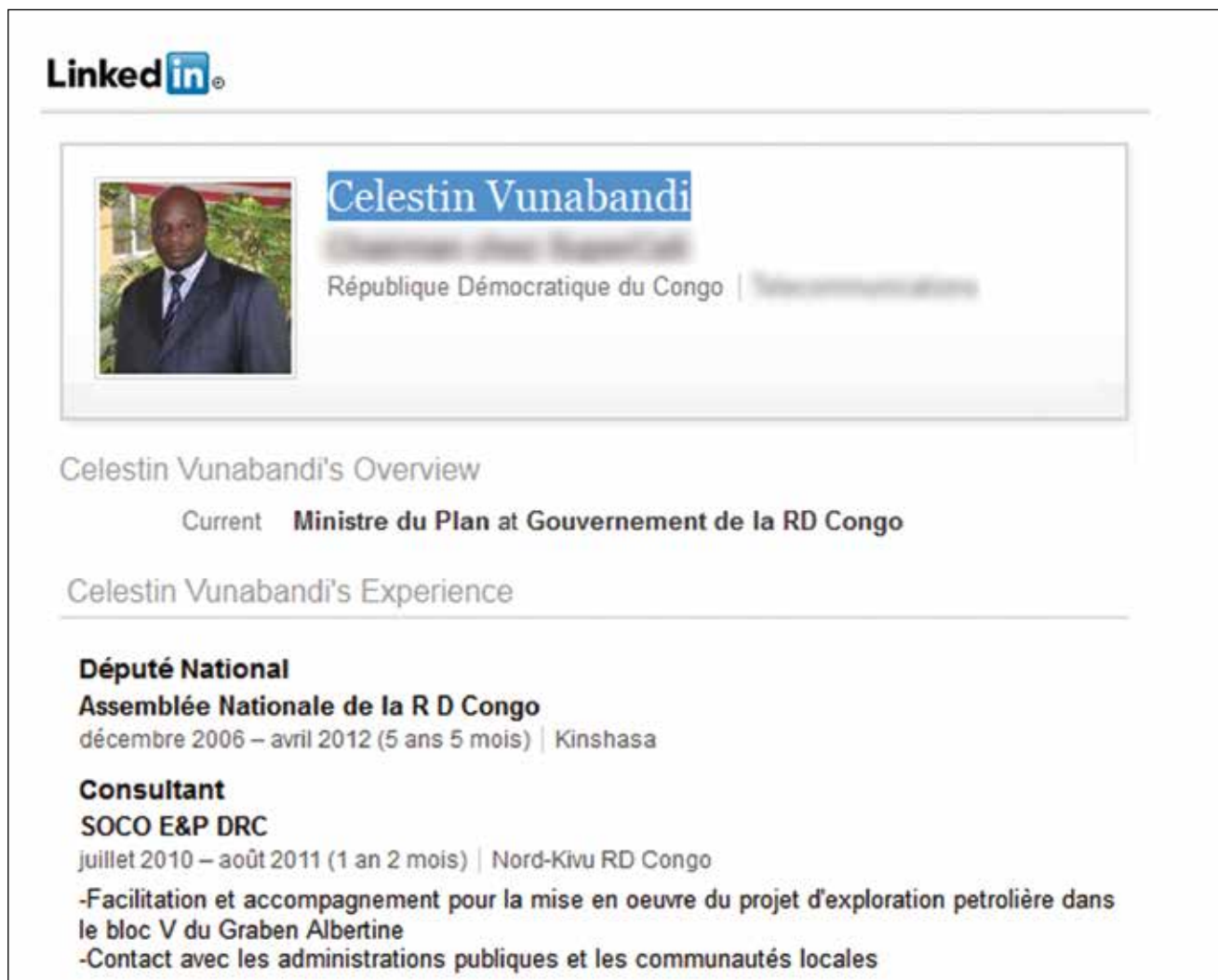
### The regional MP – a Soco lobbyist

The third of Soco's powerful friends was Céléstin Vunabandi, member of parliament for an area that includes Nyakakoma and, since April 2012, Congo's Minister of Planning and Oversight for the Implementation of the Revolution of Modernity.<sup>70</sup>

He says he acted as a consultant to Soco for over a year while he was an MP, and received money from them on a monthly basis to allow him to travel around the region promoting the oil project. He spoke in favour of Soco at public meetings, in the media<sup>71</sup> and in meetings with NGOs and regional politicians.<sup>72</sup>



Virunga's lush plant life is under threat from poaching, the charcoal trade and now oil.



**LinkedIn**

**Celestin Vunabandi**  
 République Démocratique du Congo | **Ministre du Plan at Gouvernement de la RD Congo**

**Celestin Vunabandi's Overview**  
 Current **Ministre du Plan at Gouvernement de la RD Congo**

**Celestin Vunabandi's Experience**

**Député National**  
**Assemblée Nationale de la R D Congo**  
 décembre 2006 – avril 2012 (5 ans 5 mois) | Kinshasa

**Consultant**  
**SOCO E&P DRC**  
 juillet 2010 – août 2011 (1 an 2 mois) | Nord-Kivu RD Congo

- Facilitation et accompagnement pour la mise en oeuvre du projet d'exploration pétrolière dans le bloc V du Graben Albertine
- Contact avec les administrations publiques et les communautés locales

Soco paid Célestin Vunabandi – an MP for an area in Block 5 – every month as a “consultant”

Vunabandi told Gouby in a covertly filmed interview in December 2013 that he did not sign a contract as the company believed that this may not be legal under British law. He said: “I remember when we discussed with the Soco people at the time, we came to the conclusion that, I believe, British law does not allow for such a contract to be signed with politicians... especially when it relates to the promotion of a project”.<sup>73</sup>

“Of course, every time I was going somewhere... they had to compensate me and I was engaged every month, it's true,” he said.<sup>74</sup>

Despite the sensitivities around his work for the company, Vunabandi says in [his LinkedIn profile](#) that he worked as a consultant to Soco, with the role of “facilitation and support in implementing the oil exploration project in [Soco's] Block 5” for Soco from July 2010 to August 2011.<sup>75</sup>

In Gouby's recording, Vunabandi tells her that his role was to get the local population to accept oil exploration in Virunga, using his relationships with community leaders and local authorities. “I have very good relations with politicians of all communities. Soco people have certainly counted on that asset,” he said.<sup>76</sup>

Soco has also kept the MP sweet by employing his brother, [Damas Vunabandi](#), as a protocol officer.<sup>77</sup>

Three sources from North Kivu told Global Witness that Vunabandi was the first person to hold public meetings about plans for oil exploration in Virunga, and that he did not reveal that he was a consultant for Soco. “He said that he was there [to speak to us] because he is an MP and cared about the population,” one of the sources told Global Witness on condition of anonymity. It would be “serious” if Vunabandi had been paid by Soco, the source said, as it would mean that he was acting as “judge and jury at the same time”.

Soco's relationship with Vunabandi needs to be investigated – by Soco itself and, as Global Witness is urging, by British and US authorities. His role with Soco appears to have been a serious conflict of interest at the very least. Vunabandi did not disclose his consultancy with the company in meetings with local communities and activists.<sup>78</sup> At worst, Soco's arrangement with him could have constituted bribery – particularly if payments to Vunabandi went beyond the reimbursement of expenses and if he went beyond his official remit as a public official. The UK Bribery Act came into force in July 2011, towards the end of Vunabandi's consultancy with Soco.

After the consultancy ended, Vunabandi's name continued to come up. A Soco official, discussing a phoney demonstration funded by the company, said Vunabandi helped arrange it (see section below: The spontaneous demonstration). A middleman offering bribes to the park ranger Rodrigue Katembo said in a recorded meeting that he had been told to make the approach by Vunabandi. Both the demonstration and the attempted bribery occurred during the time that Vunabandi was a minister.

The arrangement with Vunabandi raises questions not just about Soco's regional staff and contractors, but also about how executives and senior staff understood his role. Vunabandi told Gouby that he

had been a friend of Soco's Africa head Serge Lescaut since 2005. The MP has also praised Soco at a public meeting in the presence of Lescaut, Soco chairman Rui de Sousa and Congo office head José Sangwa, held the same month that his consultancy started. At the event in western Congo, reportedly attended by more than 2,000 people, he said: "I am pleased to say that this company will be in North Kivu soon – more precisely on Block 5. We will be very happy to welcome them and aid them in their work."<sup>79</sup>

The [UK Bribery Act](#) makes it a crime for British companies to bribe or offer a bribe to a foreign public official. It is also a crime for a firm to fail to prevent bribery on its behalf (see box: UK, US and Congolese bribery laws). The law says that bribery is taken to occur when an official is rewarded for the "improper performance" of his function, defined by the UK's justice ministry as acting in breach of good faith or a position of trust.

The [justice ministry's guidance](#) on the Bribery Act says that reasonable expenses and some wining and dining are most unlikely to constitute bribery. However, if this slips into over-generous treatment the line into illegality could be crossed. "The higher the expenditure... the greater the inference that it is intended to influence the official", the justice ministry says.

## UK, US AND CONGOLESE BRIBERY LAWS

The UK Bribery Act, which came into force in July 2011, makes it a crime for British companies or persons to bribe or offer to bribe a foreign public official anywhere in the world. The Act also makes it a crime for a company to fail to prevent bribery on its behalf by an "employee, agent or subsidiary" of the company. In some cases, senior company officials can be held personally liable.<sup>87</sup>

If bribery is proven to have occurred, a company could defend itself by claiming to have had "adequate procedures" in place to prevent an associated person from committing bribery.

The US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act passed in 1977 likewise makes bribery of foreign officials

by American businesses or citizens a crime. Like the UK Bribery Act it extends to bribery by third party agents.<sup>88</sup> A company's management can be held responsible for "wilful blindness" or purposely not informing themselves of suspected wrongdoing.<sup>89</sup>

Although Soco is based in London, its three executive directors – Ed Story, Roger Cagle and Cynthia Cagle – are American citizens.<sup>90</sup> Ed Story and Roger Cagle are both employed through a "wholly owned subsidiary" company registered in Delaware.<sup>91</sup> They thus come under the scope of US corruption law.

Congo's 2005 anti-corruption law makes it a crime to, "offer or give directly or indirectly to a public official" a sum of money in order to obtain favourable treatment.<sup>92</sup>

Soco did not reply to questions e-mailed by Global Witness in May 2014 on its relationship with Vunabandi, including "What payments and benefits – if any – have Soco, directly or indirectly, given to Vunabandi?" However, asked again about this in a meeting that month, a Soco spokesperson said: "we don't allow any sort of political donations or political endorsement. If something has happened that breaches our code we will investigate". Soco says it has not breached the UK Bribery Act.

### **The village chief and his aides – carrying out Soco's dirty work?**

The fourth key ally of Soco was a regional traditional chief for an area that includes Nyakakoma. The Mwami (Chief) Ndeze has stood alongside Soco officials in meetings aimed at winning over the support of local communities along Lake Edward.<sup>80</sup>

Katembo met with one of the Mwami's key aides – Kamari Birahira, who wields considerable power in Nyakakoma as the Mwami's number two there and his chief tax collector.<sup>81</sup> Katembo made undercover recordings of meetings in June 2012 and July 2013, during which Birahira offered him bribes to cooperate with Soco. There is no evidence that this was authorised by Soco.

Birahira told Katembo that the ranger was "the lock" to access Virunga and that the two of them should collaborate "to make good profits from Soco". National parks officials giving permission to Soco to enter the park "must be paid", he said. "There is money that will be paid... to the ICCN and it is a large amount."<sup>82</sup>

"You get your cut and maybe you give me a little of what they give you."<sup>83</sup>

Birahira said he was acting under the instructions of the Mwami and of Vunabandi, the MP. Vunabandi suggested the approach to Katembo in the first place, Birahira said, and the Mwami would later follow up the matter with Vunabandi.<sup>84</sup>

Both the Mwami Ndeze and Birahira were well known to Soco. Soco's operations supervisor in eastern Congo was recorded by Gouby in 2012 saying that the Mwami is a "very important person" and a "good friend", and had promised to provide people to accompany Soco on a helicopter flight.<sup>85</sup>

Birahira took part in a Soco helicopter flight to Nyakakoma in July 2013 to choose the site of the company's base camp along with Pieter Kock from Soco security contractors SSC, and Major Feruzi.<sup>86</sup>

### **The "spontaneous" demonstration – Soco pays villagers to hold a rally**

Soco used its financial clout, handing cash to local organisations to give the impression that oil exploration had popular support.

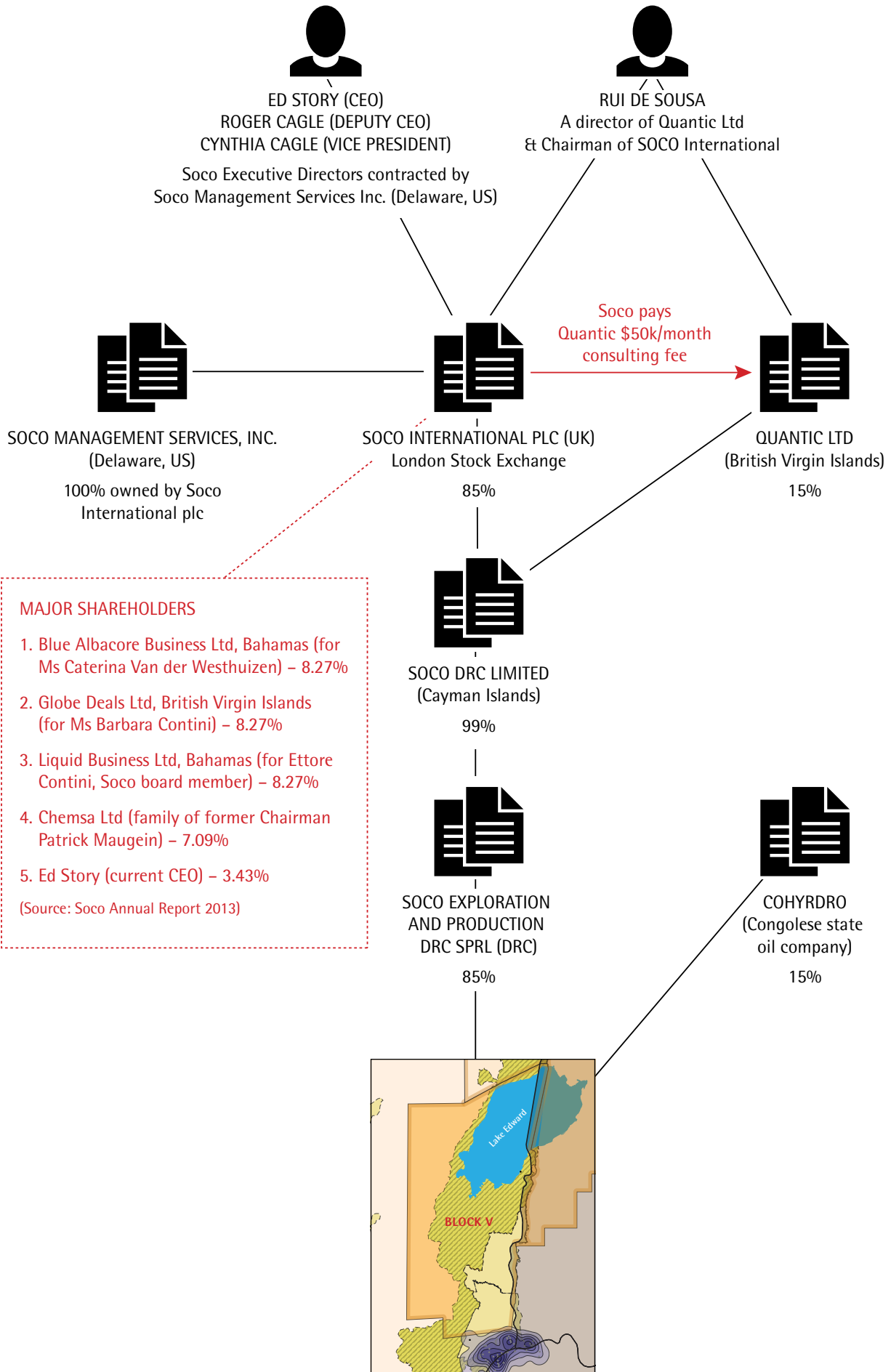
In late March 2012 activists and traditional chiefs gathered in the town of Vitshumbi, alongside Lake Edward, to hold a meeting on Soco's plans, ending it by signing a petition saying they "condemn any exploration and... any production of oil in the middle of Virunga".<sup>93</sup> Soco organised a rally eight days later in the same town, featuring live music and a banner reading: "Soco for the development of our Lake Edward fishing community".

In a hut at the end of the day, video footage shows Soco agents giving 40 local organisations envelopes of money. They told them, "pick up your envelope, other things will come later ... Don't say oh, Soco sent money or such things, do we agree?"<sup>94</sup>

In a conversation recorded undercover by Gouby three months after the demonstration, Soco's Field Operations Supervisor in eastern Congo, Julien Lechenault, acknowledged that Soco had paid for the demonstration. Lechenault, a geologist and French citizen who worked for the company for three years, said: "money was made available to do the opposite, an anti-demonstration. Completely stupid but we did it". He then "transferred the videos to Kinshasa", presumably for the news. Asked by Gouby how he organised the demonstration, Lechenault said: "In fact, via Vunabandi, who is the minister. He's our friend. He knows everyone. Just need to send cash and it's done".<sup>95</sup>

In separate, undercover filming by Gouby in June 2013, Vunabandi said: "There have been demonstrations that took place, sometimes organised by Soco".<sup>96</sup>

Soco did not answer questions from Global Witness on whether it "ever financed public demonstrations in Congo", including in Vitshumbi in April 2012.





## 2. ARRESTS, VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION

Where bribery and illicit payments have failed to win over the company's opponents, Soco's supporters have resorted to intimidation and violence to silence them. Several of Soco's opponents – activists, fishermen and Virunga rangers – have been arrested, beaten and received death threats.

Three names come up repeatedly as being linked to these arrests and intimidation, all of whom have been secretly filmed offering bribes and are closely associated with Soco: Major Feruzi, Guy Mbayma and Kamari Birahira. Most of the incidents took place in Nyakakoma.

A member of a fishermen's committee in Nyakakoma was arrested on 15 July 2013 [shortly before he was due to speak](#) about the impact of oil production in western Congo – on the other side of the country and Congo's only area now producing crude.<sup>97</sup> The soldier who came to arrest him said that he was acting on the orders of Major Feruzi, according to two witnesses. The fisherman, who was accused by his captors of being a rebel and

agitating against Soco, was released the same day, after pressure from local activists.

Soco issued a statement denying "[any knowledge or involvement in the alleged claims](#)" regarding the arrest and said it intended to investigate thoroughly.<sup>98</sup> The investigation resulted in a statement from an environmental contractor to the company saying he was with Feruzi all day on 16 July and could not see "how the Major would have had time to arrest... someone in the few minutes that we were separated".<sup>99</sup> The statement is unconvincing, not least because of its basic error with the date, referring to 16 July when the arrest was actually a day earlier.

In another incident, an activist with a local human rights group was arrested in September 2013 by local navy officials for allegedly taking photographs of Soco's camp in Nyakakoma, according to a statement by a local NGO.<sup>100</sup> As with the fisherman, he was released after an outcry from rights groups.

The activist was arrested again in February 2014 after having asked a question deemed to be critical of Soco at a public meeting organised by the Mwami Ndeze, the traditional chief, according to a local source. He had to report to the Congolese



Photo by Brent Stirton/Getty Images for WWF-Canon

Communities along Lake Edward rely on its fish stocks to survive. Soco is eyeing potential oil reserves underneath.

## DEATH THREATS BY TEXT MESSAGE

### Soco says they could have come from its supporters

At least six Congolese activists in Goma and Nyakakoma have received death threats by text message from unknown senders. One activist, from a Goma-based environmental group, was sent a text in 2011 saying he would have problems "as long as you continue talking about Soco". Another time he was told "if you continue to speak about oil, you will see [what will happen]. You should be careful".

Three activists fled Goma for several months in 2012 in fear of their lives. At the time, Global Witness met with and wrote to Soco, urging them to investigate the threats and tell Congolese allies and media that the company is "opposed to any personal threats to activists or others".<sup>105</sup> Soco consultant Tim Purcell said that the company had investigated and was satisfied that the messages did not come directly from the company.<sup>106</sup>

In correspondence with a British parliamentarian, the company said that "Soco does not tolerate violence, threats of violence or intimidation". The company added, however, that it had many supporters within Virunga and that "It would not totally surprise us if some of them have used (arguably the NGOs' tactic) of misinforming or intimidating others in support of their hope." The company said that it had spent "time and money" attempting to educate these supporters but "it is not within our power to manage their activities".<sup>107</sup>

intelligence agency in a nearby town daily for a week after his arrest. They asked him why he spoke out against Soco and – as with others who were arrested for opposing the company – accused him of trying to provoke a revolt and going against the wishes of the Congolese president.

A Congolese environmental group wrote an open letter to the regional governor of North Kivu province in September 2013 complaining of "the sustained campaign of intimidation that is being carried out by Soco International and its partner, ICCN, in their attempt to silence all those who do not support their oil exploration project" in Virunga.

"The situation is such that any entity that dares to express doubts regarding this venture exposes itself to very real danger."<sup>101</sup>

Congolese NGOs singled out Major Feruzi for being [behind the intimidation in a July 2013 public statement](#). Feruzi "has been used by Soco International; his military status has been utilised to silence anyone who has questions about the true impact of the oil project".<sup>102</sup> Congo's constitution forbids the use of military personnel for private means.<sup>103</sup>

Despite the strong evidence against him, Feruzi continued to act as Soco's agent. For example, he again attempted to recruit Katembo to work for Soco in August 2013, according to undercover footage taken by Katembo.<sup>104</sup>

In another incident, Gaïus Kowene, a freelance journalist for Deutsche Welle, Germany's international broadcaster, was attacked hours after he broadcast a critical report on Soco in Virunga in October 2013. Six armed men "dressed in military uniforms" beat him at his home in Goma and stole his laptop before fleeing, according to Congolese NGO [Journaliste en Danger](#).<sup>108</sup>

While Global Witness does not allege that Soco has knowingly commissioned a wave of intimidation in the Virunga region, it is calling on Soco to thoroughly investigate whether any of its allies have been responsible for arrests or violence targeting people because of their opposition to oil exploration.

### Stabbing and beatings of Virunga park rangers

Although Soco claims Congo's national parks authority is on its side, Virunga's park rangers say

they have suffered violence at the hands of the company's allies, in one case for simply making a routine inquiry. Two of the most serious incidents occurred at Nyakakoma, inside the park.

On 15 June 2012, a helicopter arrived in Nyakakoma, carrying a delegation of Soco employees and supporters. When a Virunga ranger asked the purpose of their visit, members of the naval force guarding the team grabbed him by the throat, punched him and stabbed him in the ankle, according to a ranger present.

Soco International said that "we are in no way responsible for the reported incident" and that the helicopter left about 45 minutes before the stabbing.<sup>109</sup> The ranger who witnessed the event disputes this, saying "white men" in the delegation saw the stabbing but left without saying a word.<sup>110</sup>

In September 2013 Katembo, the park ranger, travelled to Nyakakoma and ordered a Soco engineer to halt work on installing a communications antenna, saying that he did not have official permission. Soon, Birahira – the aide to the Mwami – turned up with four soldiers. He confiscated Katembo's possessions and told him he hoped his "body could be burnt by the local population", according to the ranger.

Katembo, fearing for his safety, took to the road, seeking to take refuge in Uganda. Two days later, on the evening of 18 September, [a group of soldiers arrested him](#) at Virunga's hillside town of Kanyaboyonga.

"They took all my things, they beat me, hitting me everywhere," said Katembo, adding that his brother, still at secondary school, and a fellow park ranger received similar treatment. They then took Katembo to his rangers' base in the area of Rwindi, where he says they slapped him in front of his guards. They then "took me all over Rwindi, to show people that I'd been arrested, mocking me".

Along the way, he said, the soldiers passed him Major Feruzi on the phone, who told him that he would be thrown in jail for opposing Soco.

At intelligence headquarters in the provincial capital Goma, officials accused him of opposing oil exploration and the government, and planning

to join the M23, a Rwanda-backed rebel group that took over swathes of eastern Congo before its defeat at the end of 2013. Mbayma turned up during his questioning, telling him he had not shown his superiors sufficient respect, said Katembo. Mbayma [told Human Rights Watch](#) that he had nothing to do with the arrest.

In his cell, Katembo received a further beating at the hands of other prisoners. He was held without charge<sup>111</sup> and only released 17 days later. Even after his release, he said, he had to report to the intelligence services in Goma daily for 80 days.

When media reports linked Soco to the arrest, the company strongly denied any involvement, saying "any allegations on this subject are totally unfounded". The Soco press release on the matter did, however, include a statement in which Mbayma justified the move on the basis that Katembo was opposing instructions from the Congolese president.<sup>112</sup>

Mbayma also told Congo's Radio Okapi that "Monsieur Rodrigue [Katembo] suspended work [carried out on the] instructions of the President of the Republic".<sup>113</sup> Katembo was arrested for "opposition to the State hierarchy", said Mbayma. Mbayma has continued to attack Katembo since, saying in an open letter to the head of the ICCN on 9 March 2014 that Katembo was plotting to "create trouble" against Soco's exploration plans and had "armed himself to the teeth", training fishermen hostile to the Mwami Ndeze to carry out sabotage operations. Saying he feared for his own life, Mbayma said he would assign a group of rangers for his personal protection and called on Soco to "support this option". He accused de Merode of playing "a dangerous game" for supporting Katembo.<sup>114</sup>



Photo by Brent Stirton/Getty Images for WWF-Canon

Hippos inside Soco's Block 5 – numbers are on the rise in the park.

On 6 June 2014 the national parks authority issued a statement saying that Mbayma "is no longer part of the ICCN". While no reason was given for his dismissal, the head of the ICCN, Cosma Wilungula, told Global Witness that Mbayma had gone beyond his mandate in running a "campaign to promote oil exploration". Human Rights Watch had reported that Mbayma made a death threat against Katembo – something denied by Mbayma himself.<sup>115</sup> Human Rights Watch also reported an allegation that Mbayma had paid rangers hundreds of dollars to attend local meetings aimed at convincing people to support Soco.

### The shooting of Emmanuel de Merode

Rangers faced great difficulties in challenging Soco but the company's officials and their allies saw the rangers' boss, de Merode, as the main obstacle. Soco's Julien Lechenault told Gouby, "What we wish is that de Merode gets fired. If he leaves, it's going to be OK."<sup>116</sup> A similar sentiment was expressed by Kamari Birahira during his initial meeting with Katembo. "Now the obstruction hinges on one person – de Merode," he said.<sup>117</sup>

Lescaut, Soco's Africa director, told Melanie Gouby in an undercover recorded conversation in June 2013: "We have official permission to enter the park and Mr de Merode has always opposed it... My great fear is that one day there will be a real accident." When asked to clarify he said: "a real incident, that people get killed, things like that".

"I warned the authorities in Kinshasa several times," he added, pointing out that a Soco contractor had been kidnapped two years earlier.<sup>118</sup>

Later events showed just how dangerous de Merode's position was. On 15 April 2014 he submitted a report on Soco's activities to the public prosecutor in Goma.<sup>119</sup> On his way back to his base in Rumangabo his car was sprayed with bullets by unknown gunmen – two bullets hit him, in the stomach and chest.<sup>120</sup> Given that nothing was stolen, it seems to have been an assassination attempt.

There are a number of interest groups who may have had reason to attack de Merode – from those pushing for oil exploration to illegal charcoal traders and ivory poachers. However, at least one observer has pointed to the timing of the shooting to indicate a possible connection to the oil dispute.

Belgian MP François-Xavier de Donnea, who helps to run a fund which supports Virunga, told the Belgian daily *La Libre Belgique* that the report submitted by de Merode was "a compromising dossier", adding that the timing of the attack was "an extremely troubling coincidence". He called on Britain, which is home to Soco's headquarters, to investigate.<sup>121</sup>

In response, Soco Chairman Rui de Sousa, told the paper that "Soco firmly denies these totally false, unfounded and defamatory insinuations", saying that "it had no link whatsoever to the attack that Mr de Merode was a victim of, an attack that it firmly condemns".<sup>122</sup>

Roger Cagle, Soco's Deputy Chief Executive, reiterated Soco's denial to British paper the *Times*. "There is nothing for us to gain by doing this. The better question to ask is, 'How is the guy able to stay down there through the M23 [rebels] killing everything in their path?'" he said.<sup>123</sup>

Following the shooting of de Merode, threatening anonymous text messages to Goma activists opposing oil exploration began again. One received a message on 20 April 2014 which said, "we are everywhere you go with your team. Don't think that if we missed your Director [de Merode] that we will also miss you".<sup>124</sup> Another received a message the following day, warning against opposing oil exploration and saying: "you'll die for nothing like de Merode".<sup>125</sup> In May WWF said unidentified callers had also threatened two of its staff in Goma over its opposition to oil exploration in Virunga. "One caller said, 'We want his head.'" reported WWF.<sup>126</sup>

Soco has said it "has had nothing to do with the death threats or texts to human rights activists" (see also box: Death threats by text message).

### 3. SOCO AND REBEL GROUPS

Undercover recordings show that Soco staff turned a blind eye to relations between their security subcontractors and rebel groups in eastern Congo, and that these subcontractors appear to have paid rebels in return for safe passage to the park's potential oilfields. It is not specified in the recordings which subcontractors are being referred to.

Large parts of Soco's Block 5 are under the control of rebel groups who finance themselves through wildlife poaching and trading minerals and charcoal.

The rebels are one of Soco's main worries. In February 2011, Pieter Kock, one of Soco's security contractors, was kidnapped and held for two days by the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), a rebel group linked to Rwanda's 1994 genocide. According to Katembo, "it's from that moment that Soco understood that they needed to start working with armed groups".<sup>127</sup>

Gouby recorded a Soco official and one of the company's contractors - Julien Lechenault, Soco's then operations supervisor in Goma, and "John", a self-described British mercenary - discussing the company's relationship with rebel groups.<sup>128</sup>

"You've got to give them money to be able to travel through the area," said Lechenault. John added: "And while you're paying them and keeping them happy, they'll work with you."<sup>129</sup>

As the conversation carried on, Lechenault, grew nervous and told John: "Shut up!... Don't. We have a journalist here." He then tried to distance himself from the payments, saying "We don't talk to these people. That's why we subcontract that shit."<sup>130</sup>

The conversation then became more argumentative.

**John:** Who's paying the fucking money? You or them?

**Lechenault:** Sub-contractors

**John:** Nah, you can't get away with that.

Other secretly recorded evidence suggests that Soco's allies have either been paying the FDLR or plan to pay them and other groups. Birahira, the aide to the Mwami, told Katembo:

"Whether the Mai Mai [local militia groups] or the FDLR, if they are still around they will have to get something so that they won't obstruct the operations," he said. Another rebel group, the Nyatura, "would also have their share so that they don't cause trouble".<sup>131</sup>

Soco has said, in response, that, "none of its employees, consultants or security contractors have played a part in the contact with rebels or payments to them".<sup>132</sup>

Soco said in a letter to Global Witness that "contact with rebels is inevitable as part of operating in the region, however, at no time has any contact between Soco or its security contractors with any Congolese rebel groups been instigated by Soco or its security contractors."

"The company does not instigate contact with rebels nor are payments made by us to rebels," it added.



Julien Lechenault, a Soco official in Congo, discussing payments to rebels: "We subcontract that shit"

## “WHO GIVES A FUCK ABOUT A FUCKING MONKEY?”

**Soco officials see park for its mineral bounty, dismiss its wildlife**

Soco's official line is that it wants to protect Virunga's biodiversity but company officials and agents have repeatedly denigrated the park, in public and in private.

Roger Cagle, Soco Deputy CEO, told the *Financial Times* in 2011 that most of Soco's block was "burnt-out savannah".<sup>135</sup> Rui de Sousa, Soco Chairman and part-owner of its Congolese business through an offshore company Quantic Limited,<sup>136</sup> said in July 2013, that Virunga "has been in decline for many years."<sup>137</sup>

In private, the statements are more blunt. Journalist Mélanie Gouby recorded Soco's operations supervisor in Congo, Julien Lechenault, and a Soco security contractor,

"John", having a frank conversation about Virunga.

"It's just a fucking mine, this park," said Lechenault.<sup>138</sup> "It's crazy, the money you could pull out."

"Fuck me, it's a monkey," chimes in John. "Who gives a fuck about a fucking monkey?"

Soco said in a statement that Julien and John "no longer work for Soco" and that the company "will never seek to have operations in the mountain gorilla habitat".<sup>139</sup> Soco's oil rights about the area where the gorillas live.

Soco's attacks on the park come as politicians and the company's local allies moot the declassification of the park. An August 2012 letter from Congo's current environment minister says that the Congolese government may opt for the "partial or total declassification of Virunga National Park for oil exploration".<sup>140</sup>

A Soco spokesman did, however, confirm to Global Witness that Lechenault and John were working with the company: "We admit that we did contract him," the spokesperson said of Lechenault, adding that John appeared to work for an "organisation contracted to provide medical services".

The prospect of oil money in eastern Congo had also attracted the attention of the M23 rebels. Colonel Vianney Kazarama, a prominent M23 spokesperson, told Gouby in a 2012 interview that "we are asking for a percentage. They [Soco] cannot exploit without us."<sup>133</sup>

He also said that Vunabandi - the local MP, minister and one-time consultant to Soco - asked him to counter local opposition to oil drilling.

"There have been people among the population that do not like Soco doing its work here," he said. "It's Vunabandi who asked me to calm those people."

"I told the people, it's better to work with Soco than with the ICCN."<sup>134</sup>

## SHOCKING SOCO

There is strong evidence of misbehaviour by Soco and its allies. A Soco official has been filmed admitting to financing a fake demonstration and appearing to acknowledge that subcontractors have been making payments to rebels. Soco's Military Liaison Officer, along with its "focal point" in the Congolese wildlife authority, have been filmed going out of their way to push Soco's agenda, and telling people they will get rich if they cooperate with the company. In one case Major Feruzi - the liaison officer who serves in Congolese military intelligence and collaborates with Soco's security subcontractors - has been covertly filmed offering a senior ranger thousands of dollars to spy on the head of Virunga. Soco should try to explain why state officials are trying so hard to push the company's agenda, and promising those who collaborate riches.

When you consider that Soco has made substantial direct payments to its focal point in the national

parks authority – according to the head of the authority himself – and that a powerful regional MP was also receiving money on a monthly basis from Soco to lobby on its behalf, the questions become more pressing still.

Through its choice of local collaborators Soco has created an atmosphere of fear around its base in Nyakakoma, making it harder for anyone to speak out. Given that Soco is headquartered in London, is headed by Americans and owns its Congolese business through a company registered in the Cayman Islands, the response should be international. US and UK authorities should launch investigations and the company should pull out definitively from Virunga. Soco should also commission its own independent inquiry into its Congolese operations.

Soco's [anti-bribery code](#) says that "The Board is aware that Soco operates in an industry sector and in certain countries which are considered to be high risk by the standards expected by the UK Bribery Act." Clearly, the evidence shows that the company's systems and procedures were inadequate.

The shooting of de Merode, who was lucky to escape with his life, was a wake-up call. Another of Virunga's top wardens, Rodrigue Katembo, had his life threatened and was beaten severely after daring to stand in Soco's way. Any investigation commissioned by Soco should look into arrests and intimidation of people who opposed oil exploration in Virunga, in each case considering any evidence of links to the company or its allies.

Soco carried out six weeks of seismic testing inside the park from April 2014.<sup>141</sup> The deal with WWF allowed Soco to complete the tests and give the Congolese government data on Virunga's oil potential. Roger Cagle told the *Times* that the deal "forces DRC [Democratic Republic of Congo] and Unesco to come to some kind of accommodation, as has been demonstrated in many other places where they have accommodated things in world heritage sites by redrawing boundaries and by agreeing to certain activities being conducted in certain ways".<sup>142</sup>

Drilling is still a threat inside Virunga if Congo attempts to declassify the park or change its borders, or if Soco sells on its rights to another company.

Although Guy Mbayma has been dismissed by the ICCN, Major Feruzi was still in Nyakakoma guarding Soco's base in August 2014, according to two sources familiar with the matter.

Back in London, Soco's Executive Directors – including Ed Story and Roger Cagle – were awarded the maximum annual bonus of 100% of salary for the third year in a row for "exceptional company and individual performance". Story and Cagle's pay in 2013 was \$3.4m and \$2.6m respectively, a rise of over 550% for both men over the past decade.<sup>143</sup> Cagle was during this time responsible for managing the company's risks, including bribery and reputational risks.<sup>144</sup>

Soco's investors – including Aviva, Legal & General and the Church of England – should push the company to rule out all oil activity within the current boundaries of Virunga and to launch a full independent investigation of corruption, intimidation and payments to rebels linked to the project.

If investors are not satisfied with the answers they get from the company, they should follow the example of Norway's pension fund, which sold its \$33m stake in Soco in 2013, partly because of concerns about the company's operations in Virunga.<sup>145</sup>

The outcome of the clash over Virunga will set the tone for how Congo's fledgling oil industry develops, determining whether it can help lift Congo out of dire poverty without trashing its natural riches and sparking yet more conflict.

If Virunga is drilled, Congo's lesser known parks such as Salonga National Park, which covers an area larger than Belgium, could be next. Huge areas of forest in Congo's central basin have already been subdivided into oil blocks. Soco is eyeing these potential riches and says it has applied for a "large interior block" in Congo.<sup>146</sup> "The whole central basin is virgin territory," Soco's Africa head Serge Lescaut has said,<sup>147</sup> "We must explore it."

# CHRONOLOGY

1925	Albert National Park is established by Belgium's King Albert I.
1960	Congo becomes independent.
1969	The park is renamed Virunga National Park.
1979	Virunga is designated a world heritage site, at the request of the Congolese government.
1991	Soco International is formed as a subsidiary of Snyder Oil Corporation, USA.
1994	Rwandan genocide. Over 1.5 million Rwandan refugees flee to eastern Congo, including hundreds of thousands into Virunga National Park.
1994	Virunga is classified as a world heritage site in danger by Unesco.
1996	First Congo War begins. Laurent Kabila's forces occupy northeast Congo, including much of Virunga. They go on to take Kinshasa in May 1997 and Kabila becomes president, renaming Zaire the Democratic Republic of Congo.
May 1997	Soco lists on the London Stock Exchange.
August 1998	Second Congo War begins, claiming millions of victims. It formally ends with the establishment of a unity government in 2003.
1999	Patrick Maugein and Rui de Sousa buy a stake in Soco and join the board as chairman and non-executive director respectively.
January 2001	Joseph Kabila becomes President of Congo after his father's assassination.
2003	Shell commits <a href="#">not to explore or pump oil in world heritage sites</a> as does <a href="#">the International Council on Mining and Metals</a>
August 2005	Soco signs an agreement for an offshore oil block in Congo-Brazzaville, its first acquisition in central Africa. A private company set up by a <a href="#">presidential advisor</a> , who as the head of the state oil company <a href="#">oversaw the bidding process for the block, gets a 10% stake in the block</a> .
October 2005	Soco Chairman Maugein and director de Sousa are named in the official inquiry into the Iraqi oil-for-food scandal. Both deny any wrongdoing. The following year Maugein dies and is replaced by de Sousa as chairman.
June–July 2007	Seven mountain gorillas are killed in Virunga in a few weeks. Pictures of villagers carrying the slain silverback Senkwekwe are published around the world.
December 2007	Soco signs a production sharing contract for Block 5 Albertine Graben, over half of which overlaps the Virunga National Park.
August 2008	Emmanuel de Merode, a Belgian conservationist, is nominated Director of Virunga National Park.
June 2010	Soco's production sharing contract for Block 5 is ratified by presidential decree.
July 2010	Regional MP Célestin Vunabandi starts working as a consultant for Soco according to his LinkedIn profile. This lasts until August 2011.
December 2010	The provincial High Court of North Kivu mandates a member of park staff to investigate allegations of wrongdoing by Soco.
2010 – 2011	About 5,000 tourists visit the park, bringing in over \$1 million in 2010 and 2011 combined.



February 2011	The head of the Congolese national parks authority says that a team of Soco officials, accompanied by a local MP "forced" their way into the park. Soco denies forced entry.
March 2011	Congo's environment minister suspends Soco's oil exploration in Block 5 and <a href="#">rejects the company's environmental assessment as "superficial"</a> .
May 2011	Soco signs an agreement with the ICCN under which the national parks authority allows Soco to enter the park. Money is paid directly to Guy Mbayma at the ICCN who coordinates on-the-ground activities, according to the ICCN head.
1 July 2011	The UK Bribery Act enters into force.
September 2011	The Congolese environment ministry gives Soco permission to conduct an aerial survey in Block 5.
2011 – 2012	Activists in the town of Goma opposing oil exploration receive death threats by text message. Three activists flee Goma in fear for several months in 2012.
March 2012	Guy Mbayma, Soco's "focal point" at the national parks authority is filmed undercover telling Virunga rangers that they will be paid "money, money, money" if they support oil exploration and will be fired if they don't.
March 2012	Activists and traditional chiefs gather in Vitshumbi and "condemn any exploration and... any production of <a href="#">oil in the middle of Virunga</a> ".
1 April 2012	A pro-oil counter-demonstration is held in Vitshumbi. Afterwards Soco agents hand local organisations envelopes saying, "Don't say oh, Soco sent money".
4 April 2012	Former rebels mutiny from the Congolese army and begin the M23 rebellion.
15 April 2012	Tourism and gorilla trekking in Virunga is halted due to the conflict.
13 June 2012	Soco's operations supervisor and a subcontractor are filmed undercover in Goma by Mélanie Gouby for a documentary, <i>Virunga</i> . The subcontractor says Soco's oil operation has paid money to rebels. Lechenault responds by saying payments aren't made directly. "That's why we subcontract that shit," he says. Soco has denied paying rebels.
15 June 2012	Members of the naval force guarding a Soco team stab a Virunga ranger in the ankle, according to a ranger present. Soco says "we are in no way responsible for the reported incident".
July 2012	A study by the International Crisis Group warns that major oil discoveries in eastern Congo " <a href="#">would exacerbate deep-rooted conflict dynamics</a> ".
6 July 2012	Unesco's World Heritage Committee calls on the Congolese government to "revise its authorisations and <a href="#">not to grant new authorisations for petroleum and mining exploration and exploitation</a> " in Virunga.
20 July 2012	Soco increases its stake in Block 5 to 85%.
September 2012	" <a href="#">The UK opposes oil exploration within Virunga</a> ", says the British Foreign Office. It urges Congo to "fully respect" international conventions it has signed.
20 November 2012	M23 capture the regional capital, Goma, and hold it until 2 December.
29 November 2012	The Belgian parliament passes a resolution calling for <a href="#">the cancelling of oil rights in Virunga</a> .
13 December 2012	<a href="#">The European Parliament passes a resolution</a> urging the Congolese government to prevent damage to Virunga from oil exploration.

May 2013	<a href="#">Total announces that it will not seek to explore for oil in Virunga</a> in its Block 3. In February 2014 Total announces a "no-go" policy on world heritage sites.
May 2013	Major Feruzi, Soco's military liaison officer, tries to bribe a senior Virunga ranger – Rodrigue Katembo – to spy on de Merode, the head of the park. He suggests that the ranger meets Soco's security contractors, SSC.
4 June 2013	<a href="#">German parliament passes a motion</a> expressing concern about possible oil exploration in Virunga National Park.
July 2013	Major Feruzi introduces the senior Virunga ranger to Pieter Wright of SSC, describing him as "my boss". The three men discuss finding reliable rangers to collaborate with Soco. The ranger is handed an envelope with \$50, with Wright saying it is "just to say thank you".
July 2013	Major Feruzi introduces the senior Virunga ranger to Pieter Wright of SSC, describing him as "my boss". The three men discuss finding reliable rangers to collaborate with Soco. Wright hands the ranger an envelope with \$50: "just to say thank you".
July 2013	A member of Nyakakoma fishermen's committee – site of Soco's base camp – is arrested, reportedly on the orders of Major Feruzi, <a href="#">shortly before he was due to speak</a> about oil.
September 2013	<a href="#">WWF files a complaint against Soco</a> alleging that the company has "violated multiple provisions of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises". <sup>148</sup> Soco disputes the allegations.
September 2013	An activist with a local human rights group is arrested by navy officials for allegedly taking photographs of Soco's camp in Nyakakoma
September 2013	After opposing the construction of a communications antenna, park ranger Rodrigue Katembo is arrested, threatened and beaten by government security forces supportive of Soco before being held without charge for 17 days. <a href="#">Soco denied any involvement</a> , although its statement quoted its ally Guy Mbayma justifying the arrest.
November 2013	The M23 is defeated in a Congolese army offensive backed by the UN. Heavy fighting in and around the park.
February 2014	Virunga reopens to tourists.
15 April 2014	<a href="#">Emmanuel de Merode is shot</a> in an attempted assassination. He had submitted a report on Soco's activities to the public prosecutor in Goma earlier in the day.
17 April 2014	Feature-length documentary Virunga premieres at Tribeca Film Festival in New York, featuring undercover footage of Soco employees and supporters in Congo.
April 2014	Threatening text messages are sent to local activists in Goma. One says, "Don't think that if we missed your Director [de Merode] that we will also miss you".
April 2014	Soco starts six weeks of seismic testing in Lake Edward, inside Virunga.
May 2014	WWF say two of its staff in Goma <a href="#">have received death threats</a> .
11 June 2014	<a href="#">Soco issues a joint statement with WWF</a> . The company says it would cease oil operations in Virunga unless Unesco and the Congolese government agree that they "are not incompatible with World Heritage status". WWF withdraws its OECD complaint. <a href="#">A Global Witness statement</a> says Soco's announcement <a href="#">could be a ruse</a> .

# ENDNOTES

- 1 Soco is one of the UK's 200 largest companies by market capitalisation according to data from the London Stock Exchange from 30 April 2014
- 2 Soco statement, 19 December 2012, "Soco's statement on the European Parliament's joint resolution on the DRC, and the Belgian government's resolution to protect Virunga national park", <http://www.socointernational.com/socos-statement-on-the-european-parliaments-joint->
- 3 The Times, 11 June 2014, "Mountain gorillas in the midst of battle for oil in Africa's oldest national park", <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/environment/article4114929.ece>. He told the *Times*: "It forces DRC and Unesco to come to some kind of accommodation, as has been demonstrated in many other places where they have accommodated things in world heritage sites by redrawing boundaries"
- 4 "More than 30,000 fishermen rely on Lake Edward in Virunga for their livelihoods." – WWF, 12 June 2012, <http://blogs.wwf.org.uk/blog/wildlife/virunga-how-can-soco-call-this-a-burnt-out-savannah/>
- 5 Wall Street Journal, 17 May 2013, "Total Rules Out Oil Exploration in Congo's Virunga National Park", <http://online.wsj.com/article/BT-CO-20130517-703772.html>
- 6 Joint Statement by SOCO International plc ('SOCO') and WWF, 11 June 2014, <http://www.socointernational.co.uk/joint-statement>
- 7 WWF, 11 June 2014, "Oil company Soco not to drill in Virunga World Heritage Site", [http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?223211/Oil-company-Soco-not-to-drill-in-Virunga-World-Heritage-Site](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?223211/Oil-company-Soco-not-to-drill-in-Virunga-World-Heritage-Site)
- 8 London Stock Exchange (as of 30 April 2014), from London Stock Exchange, 2014, List of All Companies, available at: <http://www.londonstockexchange.com/statistics/companies-and-issuers/list-of-all-companies.xls>. Soco's revenues were \$621.6 million in 2012, and \$608.1 million in 2013. See Soco International, Annual Report and Accounts, 2013, p. 11. "In 1991, SOCO International, Inc. ("SOCO International") was formed as a corporation 90% owned by the Company and 10% owned by Edward T. Story, who also became President of SOCO International.", Snyder Oil Corporation, Proxy statement for annual meeting of stockholders to be held May 20 1998, EDGAR online, [http://google.brand.edgar-online.com/EFX\\_d11/EDGARpro.d11?FetchFilingHtmlSection1?SectionID=57391-53305-60296&SessionID=Li0dFF6350fNk27](http://google.brand.edgar-online.com/EFX_d11/EDGARpro.d11?FetchFilingHtmlSection1?SectionID=57391-53305-60296&SessionID=Li0dFF6350fNk27).
- 9 Soco International registered in the UK on 10 January 1997, see company listing at UK Companies House. STATE magazine, undated, "Roger Cagle's Lofty Aspirations", [http://statemagazine.okstate.edu/Roger\\_Cagle](http://statemagazine.okstate.edu/Roger_Cagle).
- 10 See for example, Soco statement on 24 March 2003, "SOCO is an international oil and gas exploration and production company, headquartered in London. The Company has interests in Vietnam, Mongolia, Yemen, Libya, Tunisia, Thailand and North Korea with production operations in Yemen, Tunisia and Mongolia", <http://bit.ly/1tgVDBh>
- 11 Daily Mail, 20 February 2008, "City interview: Soco boss, Ed Story", <http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/markets/article-1618870/City-interview-Soco-boss-Ed-Story.html>
- 12 Soco Annual Report 1999, page 7.
- 13 Soco Annual Report 1999
- 14 Soco Annual Report 2006
- 15 Undercover recording in Congo Brazzaville from 5 June 2013
- 16 Independent Inquiry Committee into the United Nations Oil-for-Food Programme, 27 October 2005, "Report on Programme Manipulation", pp. 176–189.
- 17 Wall Street Journal, 11 March 2004, "The Oil-for-Food Scandal", by Therese Raphael, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB107896733191552156>
- 18 See Global Witness, 2005, "Congo oil trading scandal implicates top government officials", <http://www.globalwitness.org/library/congo-oil-trading-scandal-implicates-top-government-officials> and Soco's 2008 Annual Report (p. 2) says that AOGC had a 10% stake in Marine XI.
- 19 Patrick Maugein and Rui de Sousa "have an interest" in Quantic Limited, according to Soco's 2004 Annual Report (p. 50). Quantic has a 15% stake in the company that holds Soco's Congo Brazzaville assets, see Soco's 2013 Annual Report (p. 88)
- 20 The Times, 26 September 2013, "Tempus: waiting for hoopla over Zoopla", Martin Waller, <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/business/columnists/article3879073.ece> (behind a paywall). For BMO Capital Markets and RBC Capital outperform ratings see: <http://www.mideasttime.com/soco-international-plc-receives-outperform-rating-from-bmo-capital-markets-sia/119210/> from 17 April 2014 and <http://www.americanbankingnews.com/2014/08/28/rbc-capital-reiterates-outperform-rating-for-soco-international-plc-sia/> from 21 May 2014.
- 21 Soco International's Block 5 was approved by Ordonnance no. 10/044 on 18 June 2010 as reported in Congo's Journal Officiel, 22 June 2010
- 22 Letter from Cosma Wilungula to the « Procureur Général près la Cour d'Appel de Goma », 17 February 2011.
- 23 Testimony from park rangers
- 24 Letter from Cosma Wilungula to the « Procureur Général près la Cour d'Appel de Goma », 17 February 2011. The complaint was transferred to the Supreme Court in Kinshasa but no more was heard of the case, according to a source familiar with the affair.
- 25 Bloomberg, 17 February 2011, "Congo's Wildlife Authority Says That it Presses Charges Against Soco", Michael Kavanagh, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-02-17/congo-s-wildlife-authority-presses-charges-against-soco.html>
- 26 Ministère de l'Environnement, 17 March 2011, "Communiqué de presse: Le gouvernement congolais suspend la prospection pétrolière pour sécuriser le Parc des Gorilles de Montagne », available at : [http://www.rse-et-ped.info/IMG/pdf/RDC\\_Ministere\\_cp17mars11\\_1\\_.pdf](http://www.rse-et-ped.info/IMG/pdf/RDC_Ministere_cp17mars11_1_.pdf)
- 27 José Endundo letter to Congolese Prime Minister, March 2011, "Concerne: CPP-RDC/SOCO – Bloc V Rift albertin (PNVi)", No. 665/CAB/MIN/ECN-T/27/JEB/011
- 28 Soco annual report 2012, p. 18
- 29 Email sent by Soco International to Global Witness in October 2012 saying that the agreement was signed by "two senior figures in ICCN (the Chairman of the Board and the Director General)". The Director General of ICCN is Cosma Wilungula. The Chairman was Yves Mobando Yogo, who is also President of the National Assembly Natural Resources committee discussing the oil law.
- 30 The agreement between Soco International and ICCN was first mentioned in a public document by the company 10 months after it was signed, in Soco's 2011 Annual Report published in March 2012, which referred to "a cooperation agreement with the Congolese Wildlife Authority (ICCN)" but gave few others details. It was not until October 2012 that Soco gave the date of the agreement and confirmed that the company pays "some expenses to the ICCN". Then in March 2013 Soco's 2012 Annual Report was published which said that "SOCO pays a fee to the ICCN to monitor our activities whilst inside the park and contribute towards the cost of providing rangers". Despite the conflict of interest of Soco funding people monitoring its own work, Soco would later repeatedly refer to the ICCN as being "independent monitors" – for example in an August 2013 statement, which fails to mention the Soco-ICCN accord (<http://bit.ly/1wMrKek>).
- 31 Soco International, 29 April 2014, "Soco Comments on Unfounded Allegations and Inaccuracies on the Company's Current Activities in Virunga National Park", <http://www.pnnewswire.co.uk/news-releases/soco-comments-on-unfounded-allegations-and-inaccuracies-on-the-companys-current-activities-in-virunga-national-park-257212721.html>. See also Soco's 2012 annual report, p. 36: "Soco has been granted access to the Virunga National Park under an agreement with The Congolese Wildlife Authority (also known as Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature or ICCN), which exists to protect the park, its biodiversity and its people. Soco pays a fee to the ICCN to monitor our activities whilst inside the park and contribute towards the cost of providing rangers."

- 32 Global Witness interview with Cosma Wilungula, 3 June 2014. Asked how much Soco paid under the 2011 accord, he said: "These numbers are not generally known... I don't have the exact amount that I can give you." In a 27 May 2014 e-mail, Global Witness asked Soco: "How much did Soco pay ICCN as a result of the May 2011 agreement between the two organisations? Why has Soco not published the agreement? How much of the amount paid by Soco was received by Virunga National Park and what evidence do you have of this?" Soco did not reply to these questions.
- 33 Soco published the November 2013 agreement with the ICCN on its website in May 2014. The agreement gives Soco the right to "have access, penetrate and circulate in the park". Soco agreed to transfer \$15k/month (\$180k/year) to the ICCN. « Protocol d'accord relatif à l'accompagnement et au suivi écologique valant autorisation d'entreprendre des travaux de recherches scientifiques dans le parc national des Virunga », 6 November 2013. Signed by Serge Lescaut for Soco and Cosma Wilungula for ICCN : <http://bit.ly/VSbDLu>
- 34 Letter from ICCN DG Cosma Wilungula to Soco, 3 April 2012, to Soco Deputy Director General in the Democratic Republic of Congo: "the ICCN authorised you, in its letter no. 0167/DG/BDG/KBY/2012 of 01/03/2012 to carry out an initial mission to the Virunga National Park (PNVi) [in order to look into] the possibility of reconciling the conservation of the unique and irreplaceable biodiversity of PNVi... with oil exploration", <http://bit.ly/1qmBq9i>.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Ministre de l'Environnement, 9 September 2011, Arrêté Ministériel, <http://bit.ly/1tOehyb>.
- 37 José Endundo letter to Congolese Prime Minister, March 2011, "Concerne: CPP-RDC/SOCO – Bloc V Rift albertin (PNVi)", No. 665/CAB/MIN/ECN-T/27/JEB/011: "On return from my trip to Mexico, I notice that the intervention of my ministry in the dossier concerning oil exploitation in block V of the Albertine Rift, which covers a large part of Virunga National Park, led to a letter from my colleague from the oil ministry and polemic in the press."
- 38 Minutes of meeting between the environment ministry, ICCN and Soco, 27 March 2012, seen by Global Witness
- 39 "For the last six years, less than 300 park rangers have been available to protect the entire park." From Virunga National Park, 2014, "Four Women Join the Ranks of Virunga's Park Ranger Force", <http://virunga.org/news/four-women-join-the-ranks-of-virungas-park-ranger-force/>.
- 40 For the full story of the murdered gorillas see, National Geographic, "Who murdered the Virunga gorillas?" by Mark Jenkins, July 2008, <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2008/07/virunga/jenkins-text>
- 41 Virunga Alliance, undated, [http://virunga.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/NR-ENGLISH-LONG\\_FINAL-2.pdf](http://virunga.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/NR-ENGLISH-LONG_FINAL-2.pdf)
- 42 BBC, 26 October 2012, "Virunga National Park: DR Congo rangers killed", <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20092835>
- 43 Ordonnance-Loi 69-014 du 22 août 1969 sur la conservation de la nature, article 3, available at : [http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/oeed\\_appendix\\_for\\_website.pdf](http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/oeed_appendix_for_website.pdf). Original French : « Les terres domaniales situées dans les réserves intégrales ne peuvent être ni cédées ni concédées. Elles ne peuvent recevoir d'affectation incompatible avec la protection de la nature »
- 44 Loi relative à la conservation de la nature, February 2014, Article 25 : « Toute activité incompatible avec les objectifs de la conservation est interdite dans les aires protégées.... est nul tout droit accordé dans les limites des aires protégées », <http://www.digitalcongo.net/article/97993#3>
- 45 Ibid., Article 19 : « Pour raison d'intérêt public, de recherche scientifique et dans le cadre de la délivrance des permis et certificats visés aux articles 64 à 67 de la présente loi, un décret délibéré en Conseil des ministres peut déroger aux mesures de protection prévues par la présente loi. La dérogation ne peut être accordée qu'à condition qu'il n'existe aucune autre solution satisfaisante et qu'elle ne nuise pas au maintien, dans un état de conservation favorable, des spécimens des espèces de faune et de flore concernées dans leur aire de distribution naturelle. » <http://www.digitalcongo.net/article/97993#3>
- 46 June 2013 World Heritage Committee decision cited in WWF OCEC complaint against Soco, p. 15, available at: [http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/20130918\\_wwf\\_oeed\\_complaint\\_against\\_soco.pdf](http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/20130918_wwf_oeed_complaint_against_soco.pdf)
- 47 Soco's response to the film to the BBC on 24 April 2014, <http://bit.ly/1pPpKxi>
- 48 Soco International, 2014, "Block V and the Virunga National Park", <http://www.socointernational.com/current-status>
- 49 See English translation of Soco International's Production Sharing Agreement for Block 5, November 2007, available at: <http://www.globalwitness.org/sites/default/files/library/Production%20Sharing%20Agreement%20extract%20in%20English.pdf>.
- 50 Mark Power, First Secretary of the British Embassy in Kinshasa reiterated the UK Government position on 4 May 2014: "Our statement on the issue, first issued in September 2012 is worth repeating here as I often get asked our position: "The UK opposes oil exploration within Virunga National Park, a World Heritage sight [sic] listed by UNESCO as being 'in danger'. We have informed SOCO and urge the Government of DR Congo to fully respect the international conventions to which it is a signatory." See: "Conservation, development and danger in Virunga National Park": <http://blogs.fco.gov.uk/markpower/2014/05/04/conservation-development-and-danger-in-virunga-national-park/>.
- 51 The Belgian Parliament's resolution was passed on 29 November 2012 and available here: <http://www.lachambre.be/FLWB/pdf/53/2350/53K2350011.pdf>. The European Parliament's resolution was passed on 13 November 2012 and available here: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0511+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>. The German Parliament's resolution was passed on 4 June 2013 and is available here: <http://savevirunga.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/german-parliament-motion-eng.pdf>. See "Virunga: The real price of energy" in Energy Post on 2 August 2013 for more information: <http://www.energypost.eu/index.php/virunga-the-real-price-of-energy/>.
- 52 "Major Feruzi was assigned by the FARDC to act as Military Liaison Officer during SOCO's movements around the area." Soco, 26 July 2013, "Statement on allegations", no longer on Soco's website. Still available on 'Save Virunga' website: <http://savevirunga.com/2013/07/26/july-15th-breaking-news-new-cases-of-intimidation-and-arrests-of-local-community-leaders-opposing-oil-exploration-in-virunga-np/>
- 53 Document from the Parquet de Grande Instance du Nord-Kivu à Goma, 13 December 2010, seen by Global Witness.
- 54 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 12 May 2013 included in Virunga (2014) documentary
- 55 Ibid
- 56 Ibid
- 57 Source working in Congo's national parks.
- 58 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 12 May 2013
- 59 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 10 July 2013
- 60 Soco's response to the film to the BBC on 24 April 2014, <http://bit.ly/1pPpKxi>
- 61 Ibid
- 62 "Pieter Kock, SSC" took part in Soco's operations in Block 5 according to a 26 July 2013 "Statement on allegations", no longer on Soco's website (see above). When Pieter Kock was kidnapped by rebels in 2011, "Mr Cagle [Soco Deputy CEO] said the South African national worked for Demining Enterprises International, a South African security outfit," in Financial Times, 16 February 2011, "Congolese rebels release security contractor", <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/abfb905e-3a11-11e0-a441-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3BhOvUNTJ>. DEI website, "DEI also has a sister company (Specialised Security Consultants) that provides additional services such as security advisers, to meet our clients' requirements in Africa, as well as around the globe.", <http://www.idemining.com/> last accessed 09/05/14.
- 63 In French, *Directeur technique et scientifique* or DTS.
- 64 Letter from ICCN DG Cosma WILUNGULA to Soco, 3 April 2012, to SOCO Deputy Director General in the Democratic Republic of Congo: "I have just appointed the Director of the Technical and Scientific Department, as a focal point of SOCO to the ICCN"
- 65 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 21 March 2012
- 66 Ibid
- 67 Ibid

- 68 Letter from Guy Mbayma, 31 October 2013, to the Director General of Congo's National Park's Authority (the ICCN)
- 69 Undercover recording in Kinshasa, Congo from 27 November 2013
- 70 His full title is : « *Le ministre du Plan et suivi de la mise en œuvre de la révolution de la modernité* », See <http://www.plan.gouv.cd/ministre.php>
- 71 For example: Digital Congo, 24/7/10: "Forage pétrolier on-shore au Bas-Congo par la société SOCO : pari gagné de Joseph Kabila!" (<http://www.digitalcongo.net/article/68671>); Le Climat Tempéré, 17/8/10, "Bientôt de l'or noir au Nord-Kivu" (<http://www.leclimat.cd/News/Details/Provinces/bientot-lor-noir-au-nord-kivu>).
- 72 On meetings with NGOs and local politicians, see the article from Le Climat Tempéré, cited above. For meetings with local communities, see Vunabandi's LinkedIn profile, cited below.
- 73 Undercover recording in Kinshasa from 10 December 2013
- 74 Full sentence: "Bon, bien sûr il faudrait que toutes les fois où je faisais les descentes, où toutes les fois où je faisais ces exercices, on devait m'indemniser et chaque mois j'étais engagé c'est vrai." The word indemniser is ambiguous. The Hachette dictionary defines it as : « *Dedommager qqn de ses pertes, de ses frais etc. (eg. les sinistrés ont été indemnisés)* » (Translation : *Compensate someone for his losses, his fees etc. (eg. the disaster victims have been indemnised)*). However, its common usage indicates that it could be a euphemism for payments that go beyond the reimbursement of expenses. In common usage it is used in phrases such as *indemniser un stagiaire (compensate an intern)* or *indemniser les descendants d'esclaves (compensate the descendants of slaves)*.
- 75 Célestin Vunabandi LinkedIn profile, <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/celestin-vunabandi/44/716/137> (accessed 22 May 2014). Original French: "Facilitation et accompagnement pour la mise en œuvre du projet d'exploration pétrolière dans le bloc V du Graben Albertine ».
- 76 Undercover recording in Kinshasa, Congo from 10 December 2013. Global Witness translation of: «Bref j'ai des très bons rapports avec les politiques de toutes les autres communautés. C'est certainement un atout, sur lequel les gens de Soco ont bien misé ».
- 77 Soco Security note (Travel procedure to Block V & visitor information leaflet), December 2011. See also his LinkedIn profile (<http://bit.ly/1182LdK>). On Damas Vunabandi being Celestin Vunabandi's brother: local sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, in interviews 5-6 June 2014.
- 78 Global Witness interview with local activists.
- 79 L'Avenir, « Forage pétrolier on-shore au Bas-Congo par la société SOCO : pari gagné de Joseph Kabila ! », 24 July 2010, <http://www.digitalcongo.net/article/68671>
- 80 Global Witness interviews with people in North Kivu who have witnessed the Mwami's attendance at meetings with Soco.
- 81 On Kamari's position as the Mwami's number two in Nyakakoma, our sources include a park ranger and North Kivu sources.
- 82 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 26 July 2013
- 83 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 25 June 2012
- 84 In the recorded conversation, Kamari recounts a conversation with Vunabandi: "Last time I spoke with the minister ... he asked me: 'Kamari, is Rodrigue a Mututsi or Mundande?' I said to him: 'No he is Muhavu'. He replied: 'He sounds like your kin, why don't you talk it over with him? So he can come to an understanding with us to lift the blockage and start researching our resources.'" Later in the conversation, he says: "We will speak with the Mwami today and the Mwami will speak with the minister and they will contact you directly in person, isn't it? The security of Soco's people should be in the hands of agent Rodrigue and his men, but this should stay with you (it should stay behind closed doors), are you getting me? Because they are powerful people as well, so whatever we can do we can do it that way."
- 85 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 13 June 2012
- 86 Soco International, 26 July 2013 "Statement on allegations", no longer on Soco's website (see above)
- 87 UK Bribery Act 2010, Articles 6 and 7, available at: [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uk-pga/2010/23/pdfs/ukpga\\_20100023\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uk-pga/2010/23/pdfs/ukpga_20100023_en.pdf)
- 88 "Agents can include third party agents, consultants, distributors, joint-venture partners, and others.", US Securities and Exchange Commission website - <http://www.sec.gov/spotlight/fcpa.shtml>
- 89 Jones Day, 2010, "Uncle Sam is Watching", <http://www.jonesday.com/files/Publication/22897a58-0ee6-4985-b201-bf0f16cde04d/Presentation/PublicationAttachment/978494d7-64f8-42e8-8ace-c87843c7d6b5/unclesam.pdf>: "According to US authorities, even if the parent corporation does not explicitly authorise the illegal acts by the subsidiary, the parent may nonetheless incur liability if it was aware of and failed to stop the illegal acts (which may constitute implicit authorisation); if it acted with "wilful blindness" (being aware of a high probability that a bribe will be paid and taking steps to avoid learning that fact); or if it discovered the illegal acts after the fact and then accepted monetary benefits arising from such acts"
- 90 Soco Annual Report 2012, p. 59
- 91 See Soco International Plc, 20 August 2010, "Notice of Extraordinary General Meeting", <http://bit.ly/1zPSSFn>, p. 18: "Edward Story and Roger Cagle have service agreements both dated May 1997 with SOCO Management Services, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of the Company, pursuant to which they are employed as the Group's President and Chief Executive Officer and the Executive Vice President, Deputy CEO and Chief Financial Officer respectively." Soco's 2013 Annual Report (p. 45) says that Mr Story and Cagle's contract with the company dates from 14 May 1997. Soco Management Services, Inc. is a Delaware (US) company, number 2698180.
- 92 Loi no. 05/006 du 29 mars 2005 modifiant et complétant le décret du 30 janvier 1940 portant code pénal dite « loi anti-corruption » : Article 147bis (2) : corruption is : « le fait d'offrir ou d'octroyer directement ou indirectement à un agent public ou à tout autre personne des sommes d'argent tout bien ayant une valeur pécuniaire ou tout autre avantage tel qu'un don, une faveur, une promesse ou un gain pour lui-même ou pour autrui personne physique ou morale en vue de l'accomplissement ou de l'omission d'un acte dans l'exercice de ses fonctions ».
- 93 Communiqué final de l'atelier de réflexion sur la problématique de l'exploration et l'exploitation du pétrole du Bloc V du Rift Albertin par la multinationale Soco, 24 March 2012, Vitshumbi, available at : <http://savevirunga.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/vitshumbi-communique3a9-final.pdf>
- 94 Undercover recording in Vitshumbi, eastern Congo from 1 April 2012
- 95 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 30 July 2012.
- 96 Undercover recording in Kinshasa, Congo from 30 June 2013
- 97 IDPE, 28 September 2013, "Indignation in the face of intimidating behavior on the part of the SOCO-ICCN coalition", Open letter to the governor of North Kivu, [http://www.congoforum.be/upldocs/28-09-13%20Lobbying%20SOCO-ICCN\\_EN.pdf](http://www.congoforum.be/upldocs/28-09-13%20Lobbying%20SOCO-ICCN_EN.pdf)
- 98 Soco International, 26 July 2013 "Statement on allegations", no longer on Soco's website (see above)
- 99 Ibid.
- 100 IDPE, September 2013 (see above)
- 101 IDPE, September 2013 (see above)
- 102 Réseau CREF, CREDDHO, IDPE and SOPR, 24 July 2013, "Press release N° 01/2013 of the Consortium... on the sustainable management of natural resources in the Virunga National Park
- 103 Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Article 188: «Les Forces armées sont républicaines. Elles sont au service de la Nation toute entière. Nul ne peut, sous peine de haute trahison, les détourner à ses fins propres. Elles sont apolitiques et soumises à l'autorité civile».
- 104 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 13 August 2013
- 105 Letter from Patrick Alley, Global Witness Director, to Roger Cagle, 17 October 2012
- 106 Ibid
- 107 Letter dates from 2012
- 108 Journaliste en danger (JED), 11 October 2013, "Armed men attack foreign correspondent in Democratic Republic of Congo", [http://www.ifex.org/democratic\\_republic\\_of\\_congo/2013/10/11/armed\\_attack/](http://www.ifex.org/democratic_republic_of_congo/2013/10/11/armed_attack/)
- 109 Soco, 16 June 2012, "Statement on the Helicopter Incident/Virunga National Park on 15 June 2012", <http://savevirunga.com/2012/06/17/socos-statement-on-incident-virunga/>
- 110 Recorded interview in eastern Congo with a ranger, 25 June 2012

- 111 Synchronicity Earth, 3 October 2013, "Joint statement of NGOs on the arrest of Virunga Park Ranger, Rodrigue Katembo Mugaruka", <http://www.synchronicityearth.org/blog/2013/10/pressrelease-virunga-park-ranger-rodrigue/>
- 112 Soco, 1 October 2013, "Statement in response to recent media allegations", <http://bit.ly/XXPLQk>
- 113 Radio Okapi, 24 September 2013, "Nord-Kivu: le conservateur principal du parc des Virunga aux arrêts à Goma », <http://bit.ly/1sO2zlh>
- 114 Letter from Guy Mbayma, 9 March 2014 to the Director General of the Congolese national parks authority (the ICCN)
- 115 Human Rights Watch said in its June 4 2014 report "DR Congo: investigate attacks on oil project critics": "Katembo told Human Rights Watch that on September 3, Dr. Guy Mbayma Atalia, the technical and scientific director for the ICCN and the agency's focal point with SOCO at the time, had warned him that if he continued to oppose SOCO's activities in the park, he would be killed. In an interview with Human Rights Watch on April 23, 2014, Mbayma denied this allegation and said he had nothing to do with Katembo's arrest."
- 116 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 14 June 2012
- 117 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 25 June 2012
- 118 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 5 June 2013
- 119 France 24, Belgian head of wildlife reserve shot in DR Congo, 17 April 2014: "The Belgian MP said de Merode had called him four hours before the attack to say he was driving to Goma to file a report on activities by the British-based Soco oil company. "Two to three years ago, a prosecutor asked the park authority to investigate some facts about Soco," de Donnea said. "Park rangers collected evidence in the report that was filed yesterday."" (<http://www.france24.com/en/20140416-virunga-merode-national-park-shot-congo-kivu-drc/>).
- 120 BBC News, 16 April 2014, « Belgian Emmanuel de Merode shot in DR Congo ambush", <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-27049627>. Sources familiar with the affair have told Global Witness that Emmanuel was hit by two of the bullets fired at his car
- 121 La Libre Belgique, 15 April 2014, "Le directeur belge du parc des Virunga hors de danger », <http://bit.ly/1pcaQvJ>
- 122 Rui de Sousa, 17 April 2014, « Droit de réponse de la société Soco International », available at : <http://bit.ly/1pcaQvJ>
- 123 The Times, 22 April 2014, "UK firm tests for oil in Congo heritage site", <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/environment/article4069344.ece> (behind a pay wall)
- 124 Message received at 18:31 Goma time on 20/04/2014 from +243 997078925 in French: " unutil de change de voiture car ns kenessons toutes vos voiture et ns sommes partout ou vs passe avec vtre equipe. ne croyez ps ke si ns avons rater vtre directeur k'on peut vs rate aussi ».
- 125 Message received at 17:01 Goma time on 21/04/2014 from +243990652229 in Swahili: "weyeunawazakuandikaitaacha-hatutoshepetrolemutakufabure sawa De Merode", translated into English as : « You, you think to write will hinder us extracting oil!!! You'll die for nothing like De Merode"
- 126 WWF staff threatened over Virunga, 12 May 2014 ; [http://www.wwf.org.uk/wwf\\_articles.cfm?unewsid=7160](http://www.wwf.org.uk/wwf_articles.cfm?unewsid=7160)
- 127 Rodrigue: "Soki a essayé de kidnapper un cadre de Soco, il est parti avec lui en brousse. C'est par là que Soco a compris qu'il fallait commencer à travailler avec les groupes armés. »
- 128 Acknowledging both Lechenault and John's association at the time with the company, Soco told the BBC: "Soco states that the two individuals recorded – Julien and John – no longer work for Soco." Soco's response to the film to the BBC on 24 April 2014, <http://bit.ly/1pPpKxi>
- 129 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 13 June 2012 included in Virunga (2014) documentary. The conversation was in English.
- 130 Ibid.
- 131 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 26 July 2013
- 132 Soco's response to the film to the BBC on 24 April 2014, <http://bit.ly/1pPpKxi>
- 133 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 11 November 2012 included in *Virunga* (2014) documentary
- 134 Ibid
- 135 Financial Times, 21 February 2011, "Battle over oil in Congo national park", available at: <http://on.ft.com/1teRWfo>
- 136 Quantic Limited, part-owned by de Sousa, has a 15% stake in Soco's Congolese business, Soco Annual Report 2012
- 137 Soco, 30 July 2013, "Soco International's statement on current activities in Virunga National Park", <http://bit.ly/1vU3HWN>
- 138 Undercover recording in eastern Congo from 13 June 2012 included in *Virunga* (2014) documentary
- 139 Soco's response to the film to the BBC on 24 April 2014, <http://bit.ly/1pPpKxi>
- 140 Ministry of Environment, 4 August 2012, Letter from Congolese Environment Minister Bavon N'sa Mputu Elima to the Permanent Secretary of the National Commission for UNESCO,
- 141 <http://prn.to/1wlwamn>
- 142 The Times, 11 June 2014, "Mountain gorillas in the midst of battle for oil in Africa's oldest national park", <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/environment/article4114929.ece>
- 143 Ed Story's total pay in 2013 was \$3.392m up from \$518,000 in 2003 an increase of 555%; Roger Cagle's total pay in 2013 was \$2.574m up from \$371,000 in 2003 an increase of 594%. Figures from Soco Annual Reports for 2013 (p. 64) and 2003 (p. 39), calculations by Global Witness. Soco's 2013 annual report can be found here: <http://bit.ly/1tGQvov>. Its 2003 report can be found here: <http://bit.ly/W3xCpa>.
- 144 See Soco Annual Report 2013, p. 28: "The Board has designated the Chief Financial Officer [Roger Cagle] as the executive responsible for the Company's risk management function." Soco appointed a new CFO in May 2014.
- 145 Save Virunga website, 11 July 2013, "July 8, 2013: Norway's Pension Fund divests from UK Oil Company SOCO International Plc", <http://savevirunga.com/2013/07/11/july-8-2013-norways-pension-fund-divests-from-uk-oil-company-soco-international-plc/>
- 146 Soco's annual report from 2009 (p. 12) "SOCO hopes to broaden its portfolio in DRC, with its application for a licence over Block 5, in the Albertine Graben in eastern DRC, pending a Presidential Decree and an application submitted for a large interior block."
- 147 "Toute la Cuvette centrale est vierge. Il faut l'explorer. » From Africa News interview : Africa News interview, July 2012, « Serge Lescaut: «SOCO ne pollue pas le parc de Virunga», available at : <http://www.eventsrdc.com/?p=2512>
- 148 [http://www.wwf.org.uk/wwf\\_articles.cfm?unewsid=6828](http://www.wwf.org.uk/wwf_articles.cfm?unewsid=6828)



Global Witness is a UK based non-governmental organisation which investigates the role of natural resources in funding conflict and corruption around the world.

Global Witness is a company limited by guarantee and registered in England (no. 02871809).

Global Witness  
Lloyds Chambers  
1 Portsoken Street  
London  
E1 8BT  
mail@globalwitness.org  
www.globalwitness.org

ISBN: 978-0-9926910-9-7  
© Global Witness, 2014

Cover art: Laurindo Feliciano [www.laurindofeliciano.com](http://www.laurindofeliciano.com)