

The Military Court Goes to Kasongo

Part of the mission I had in the DRC was to assist the Military Court to do a trip to Kasongo. The purpose was to get the Court to Kasongo so that they could have two trials. That's what happened.



The Court held the trials in a somewhat outdoor facility, so the spectators had to stand outside in the street.



But really, the scene was more like holding court on a country lane.

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The prosecutor and his team are ready to go.



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The accused policeman stands before the Court while the prosecutor argues why he's proved guilt of extortion.



The defense lawyer tried his best to convince the judges.



While the folks watch from across the street.

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And snacks were available.



This police officer was ultimately convicted for wrongfully arresting someone and trying to extort about \$100. He was sentenced to eight years jail.

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As a quick aside, here is what the Military Court in Kindu, Maniema Province looks like. It is the highest court in that province and where the Military Court holds trials when they are not "on the road."



The second case held in Kasongo charged two soldiers with sexual assault. The Court found them guilty of using a machete to threaten the husband and force him to leave their home. The soldiers then sexually assaulted the wife. They got five years jail. By the way, that's the Kasongo prison in the background.



Once done the Court had time to tour Kasongo. After all, they were free.

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And after the tour, the Court had time to socialize.



Meanwhile, the prosecutor, our police colleague from Ivory Coast and your writer enjoy a beverage at Place John in downtown Kasongo.

The wonderful bicycle man (featured in another story) is seated to the right of the photo.

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