



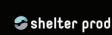
# THE EMPIRE OF SILENCE

A MOVIE BY  
**THIERRY MICHEL**

PRODUCTION CHRISTINE PIREAUX SCÉNARIO THIERRY MICHEL - CHRISTINE PIREAUX RÉALISATION THIERRY MICHEL MONTAGE IDRIS GABEL  
MUSIQUE MICHEL DUPREZ - GWENAËL MARIO GRISI, ANGE NAWASADIO IMAGE THIERRY MICHEL SON CEDRIC MBONGO CO-PRODUCTION CÉLINE RAUW

COOPÉRATION LES FILMS DE LA PASSERELLE / R.T.B.F. SECTEUR DOCUMENTAIRES / LE CENTRE DU CINÉMA ET DE L'AUDIOVISUEL DE LA FÉDÉRATION WALLONIE-BRUXELLES  
PARTICIPATION WALLIMAGE (LA WALLONIE) / LA COOPÉRATION BELGE AU DÉVELOPPEMENT / L'ACAT - ACTION DES CHRÉTIENS POUR L'ABOLITION DE LA TORTURE / TV5MONDE / VRT - VLAAMSE RADIO - EN TELEVISIEMROEPOORGANISATIE  
DÉVELOPPEMENT SHELTER PROD CO-PRODUCTION TAXSHELTER.BE - D'ING / DAUVISTER / LIEGE AIRPORT / BISANGA CO-PRODUCTION TAX SHELTER DU GOUVERNEMENT FÉDÉRAL DE BELGIQUE  
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# THE EMPIRE OF SILENCE

*Unpunished Crimes in the Congo*



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# SYNOPSIS

For 25 years, the Democratic Republic of Congo has been ravaged by a war that has been largely ignored by the media and the international community. The victims run into the hundreds of thousands, if not millions.

The perpetrators of these crimes are countless: rebel movements, but also armies, those of the Congo and neighboring countries... All of them seem to be caught up in a dizzying array of killings, for power, for money, in order to monopolize the wealth of the Congo with impunity, in the midst of general indifference.

Travelling through Congo with his handheld camera for thirty years, Thierry Michel witnessed the fights, the suffering but also the hopes of the Congolese people. Relaying the plea of Doctor Mukwege, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, he retraces the sequence of this heartless violence which has ravaged and ruined Congo for a quarter of century.

An uncompromising documentary, **Empire of Silence** does not spare any of the actors in the tragedy, nor the Congolese leaders, neighboring countries, nor international institutions. It is based on a UN document, the Mapping Report, which lists the violence committed in the Congo between 1993 and 2003, a disturbing document that was buried.

“Empire of Silence” is an epic tale that traverses the vast Congo, from the mountains and forests of Kivu to the banks of the river in Équateur Province.

A merciless documentary, inspired by revolt and solidarity. A film for history and against oblivion, to break the law of silence and to put an end to the reign of impunity.

# TRAILER

Lien : <https://vimeo.com/558964060> / mot de passe : Thierry



# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

For more than 25 years, I have been keeping a cinematographic chronicle of the history of Congo-Zaire and of all the turmoil that this country has experienced since 1990. In my 11 films, I have dealt with most of the major themes of this country/continent: History with the film “Mobutu, King of Zaire”, the presence of post-colonial expatriates with “The Last Colonials”, power and the upheavals at the end of a dictatorship with “The Cycle of the Serpent”, politics mixing business, soccer and media with the very Berlusconi “The Irresistible Rise of Moïse Katumbi”, geography with “Congo River”, the economy at the heart of globalization with “Katanga Business”, justice with “The Chebeya Affair, a State Crime”, rape as a weapon of war with “The Man Who Mends Women”...

It was while making the film “The Man Who Mends Women” in Eastern Congo with Colette Braeckman, on the work of Dr. Mukwege, that I became aware of the magnitude of the tragedy experienced by this country since the end of President Mobutu’s dictatorial regime, which had imposed civil peace for over three decades, based on unwavering repression and widespread corruption and exploitation of the country’s wealth.

During my research in preparation for this film, “The Man Who Mends Women”, I discovered the staggering extent of these crimes committed in the heart of Africa thanks to an exceptional report by United Nations experts, called the “Mapping Report”, which lists 617 serious cases of crimes against humanity and war crimes committed between 1994 and 2004 and which draws a clear conclusion: Among these crimes, multiple massacres of the same kind as those of Srebrenica in former Yugoslavia, for which the criminals have recently been judged responsible and condemned by an International Criminal Tribunal. These crimes perpetrated in Congo-Zaire are little known or publicized and have not been the subject of any judicial follow-up, not in the DRC, nor before an African court nor an international jurisdiction.

I could not end my series of 11 films on this country without having made this crucial documentary that gives the keys to understanding the ever-current tragedy which this great African country has been plunged into. It is one of the richest in the world due to its agricultural, forest and energy wealth, and, of course, due to the strategic importance of its precious mineral reserves that are essential to the prosperity of Western and Asian countries and to the development of advanced technologies.

Thierry Michel

**SPEECH (extract)**

**BY DENIS MUKWEGE**

**2018 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE,**

**OSLO, DECEMBER 10, 2018.**

Denis Mukwege, pendant son discours du Prix Nobel de la Paix



***My name is Denis Mukwege. I am from a country which is one of the richest in the world. Yet, my fellow countrymen and women are among the poorest in the world.***

*The disturbing reality is that the abundance of our natural resources – gold, coltan, cobalt and other strategic minerals – is fueling the war which is the source of extreme violence and despicable poverty in the Democratic Republic of Congo.*

***As I speak, a report is gathering dust in a desk drawer in New York. It is the result of a professional and rigorous investigation into war crimes and human rights violations in Congo. This investigation explicitly names victims, places, and dates but leaves out the perpetrators.***

***This Mapping Report, prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, describes no less than 617 war crimes and crimes against humanity and possibly even crimes of genocide.***

*What is it going to take for the world to take this into account? There is no lasting peace without justice, yet justice is not negotiable.*



# HISTORIC TIMELINE

**April 6, 1994**

The plane carrying Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira, both Hutus, was shot down by surface-to-air missiles as it prepared to land in Kigali, Rwanda.



**October 6, 1996**

Massacre at Lemera Hospital (Kivu), where Dr. Mukwege Denis was a doctor. The first of a long series of massacres which are still ongoing to this day.



**August 2, 1998**

A new rebellion breaks out in Kivu against the Kabila regime, remotely operated by Rwanda and Uganda. Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola came to Kinshasa's aid.



**May 1994**



Following the Rwandan genocide, more than 1 million Hutus took refuge in eastern Zaire in Kivu.

**March 15, 1997**



Kisangani, the country's third largest city, fell to the Alliance of Laurent Désiré Kabila.

**July 1999**



Signing of the Lusaka Agreement establishing a ceasefire and the deployment of UN observers.

**August 1996**

Banyamulenge Tutsis and Zairian rebels launched a new rebellion in North Kivu, shortly followed thereafter by a rebellion in South Kivu. Several Zairian towns fell to the rebels under the leadership of Laurent Kabila.

**July 28, 1998**



President Kabila ends the presence of Rwandan military in the Congolese armed forces.

**July 1996**



First war and AFDL regime\*

**May 17, 1997**



Entry of the Alliance troops into Kinshasa. In Lubumbashi, Laurent Désiré Kabila assumes power and proclaims himself head of state. Mobutu flees the country.

**June 5-10, 2000**

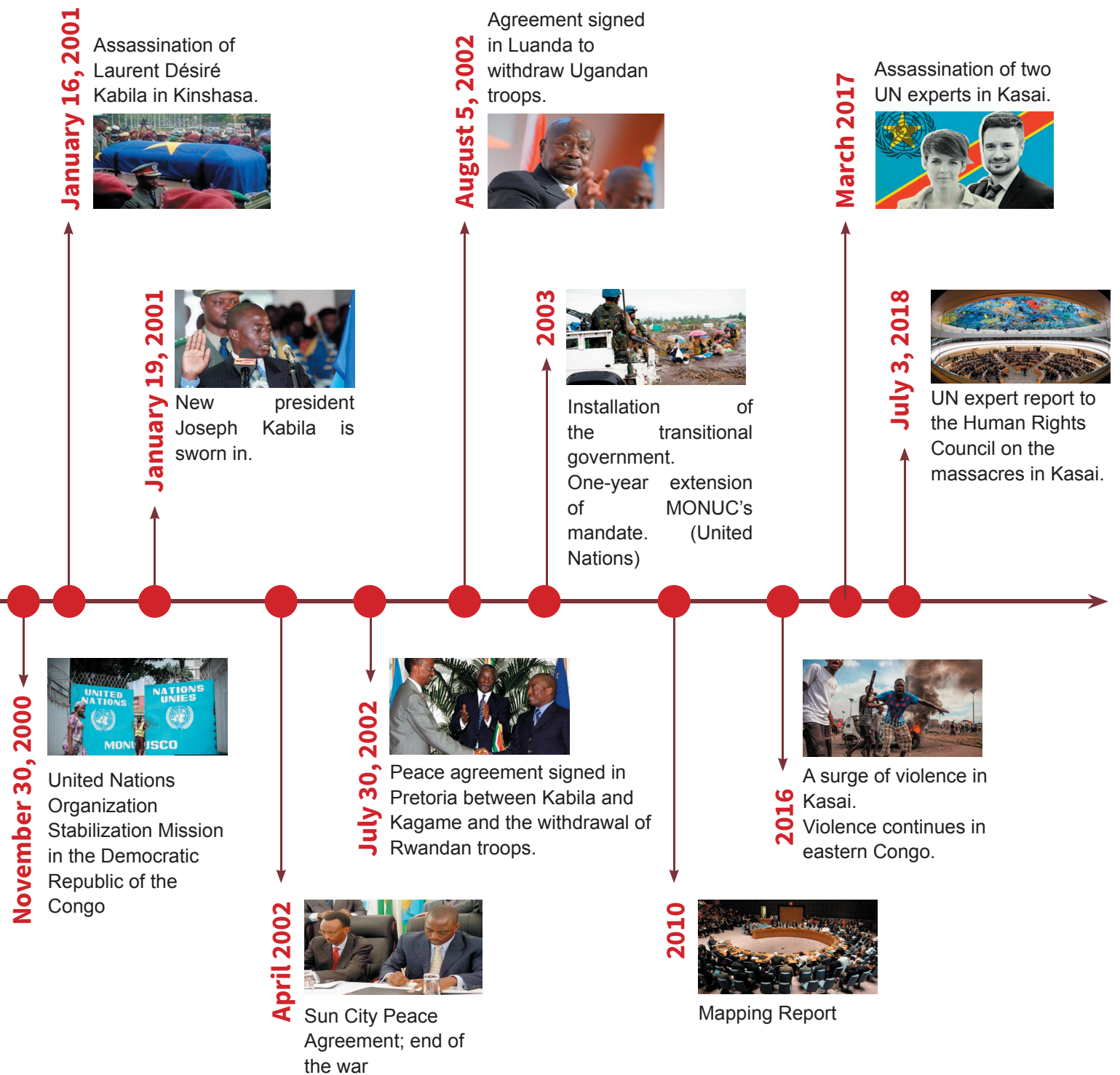


New war in Kisangani between Rwandans and Ugandans.

\* The Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL or ADFLC) was a coalition of Rwandan, Ugandan, Burundian and Congolese dissidents, disgruntled minority groups and nations that overthrew Mobutu Sese Seko and brought Laurent-Désiré Kabila to power during the First Congo War.

**July 1996 to July 1998  
FIRST WAR**

**August 1998 to January 2000  
SECOND WAR**



**January 2001 to June 2003  
 TOWARDS THE CHANGEOVER**

# PEOPLE & LOCATIONS

US Congress



Washington (USA)

United Nations



New York (USA)

**SCOTT CAMPBELL,**  
UN / HRW



**STEPHEN RAPP,**  
politician



**FEDERICO BORELLO,**  
MONUC / UN



**LUC CÔTÉ,**  
lawyer / UN



**JOSE MARIA ARANAZ,**  
UN / human rights



**SONIA ROLLEY,**  
journalist



## THE WITNESSES



### **Dr. DENIS MUKWEGE**

witness to massacres and rapes throughout the years and winner of the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize, who continues to fight with international institutions to end the impunity of the major criminals currently in power.



### **THÉRÈSE KULUNGU**

lawyer at the Bar of Kinshasa and South Kivu. She has notably defended survivors of rape before military courts.

She joined Dr. Mukwege's Panzi Foundation and is a promoter of several women's human rights associations. She advocates alongside Dr. Denis Mukwege, for justice to be brought to the victims of sexual violence of armed conflict in the DRC.



### **DEOGRATIA NAMUJIMBO**

a Congolese journalist and frontline witness who accompanied the rebel troops during the massacres. He wrote the book "On tue tout le monde et on recommence" [We Kill Everyone and Start Over Again].

He lives in exile for denouncing war crimes that he personally experienced.



European  
Commission



Brussels (BE)

International Criminal  
Court



The Hague (NL)

United Nations Human  
Rights Council



Geneva (CH)

**CHRISTOPHE  
CHATELOT,**  
journalist

**LUC  
HENKINBRANT,**  
Amnesty Intl.

**JEAN-PIERRE  
MASSIAS,**  
specialist

**EMMA  
BONINO**  
politician / humanitarian

**SONIA  
BAKAR,**  
MONUC / UN

**ZEID RA'AD AL  
HUSSEIN,**  
UN / human rights

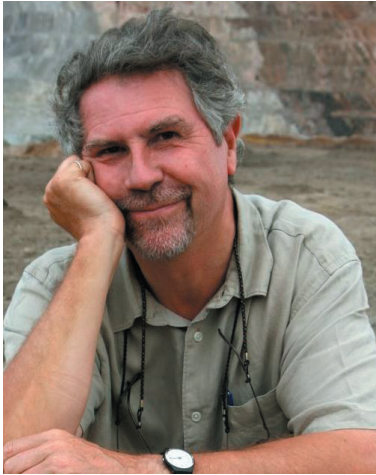
**NAVY  
PILLAY,**  
Legal expert /  
ICC



Democratic  
Republic of  
Congo



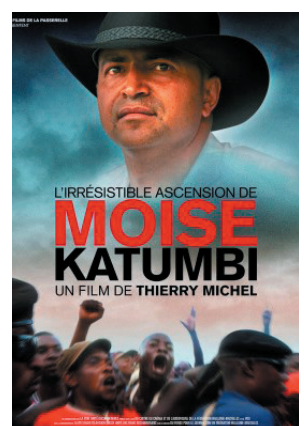
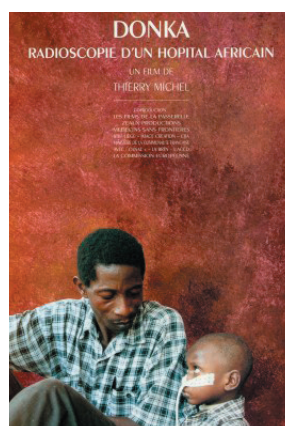
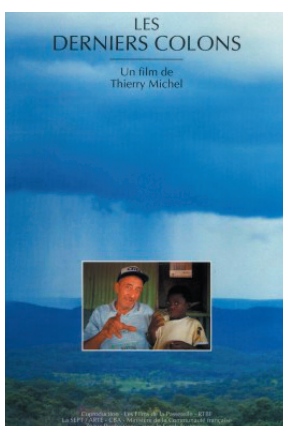
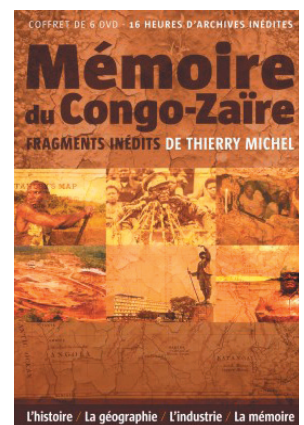
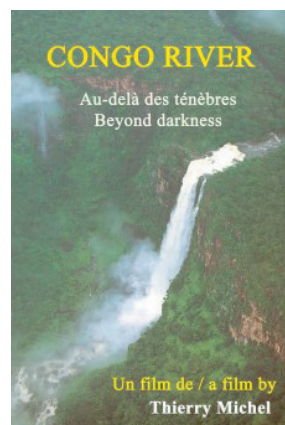
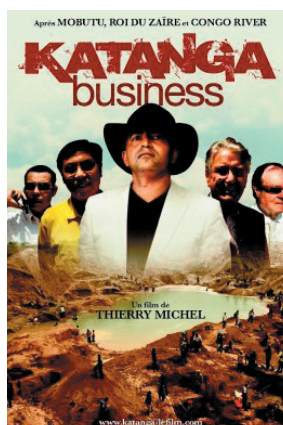
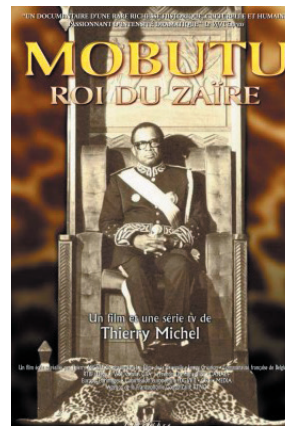
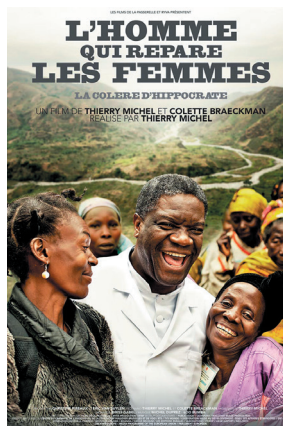
# THE WRITER – DIRECTOR Thierry Michel



Filmmaker, photographer and journalist, from coal mines to prisons, from Brazil and the Maghreb to Sub-Saharan Africa, Thierry Michel denounces the suffering and revolts of the world, sometimes mixing fiction and reality.

Born in 1952 in Charleroi, Belgium, in an industrial region nicknamed “The Black Country”, Thierry Michel started studying at the age of 16 at the Institut des Arts de Diffusion (Institute of Broadcast Arts), in Brussels.

In 1976, he entered Belgian television where he made numerous reports around the world. He then moved on to cinema. He alternated between two feature-length fiction films and numerous internationally-recognized, award-winning and widely distributed documentaries.



# THE IMPACT CAMPAIGN #JusticeForCongo

In order to accelerate international awareness of the tragedy that has been unfolding in the DRC for the past 25 years, the “Justice for Congo” campaign will aim to raise awareness among the general public, in particular through the creation of educational material to facilitate citizen mobilization.

## OBJECTIVES

**TO ALLOW FOR A GRIEVING PROCESS IN THE DRC**



To allow the victims to begin their mourning process without fearing the perpetrators.

To work towards **ending impunity** through the creation of local and international tribunals.

**TO RAISE INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS**



To raise awareness among the general public about the possible actions that each of us can take at our own level **to clean up the “blood minerals” market.**

To become aware that this concerns us all.

**TO IMPLEMENT POLITICAL INTENTIONS**



To call upon the international community and political institutions to really mobilize at the global level.

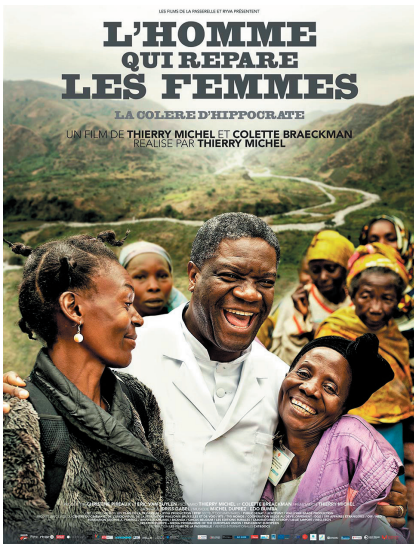
To turn their peaceful intentions into **concrete and efficient actions.**

## THE METHODS

1. The creation of pedagogical and didactic tools for citizen use to invite individual and collective action.
2. A digital campaign on the internet and on social networks to raise public awareness on the violence in the Congo and the world’s involvement in its causes and consequences.
3. Screenings, debates and events at all of the important places for international politics: The United Nations in New York, the European Parliament, the Human Rights Council in Geneva, the International Criminal Court in The Hague, etc... These events will take place in the presence of witnesses to the conflicts, including Dr. Denis Mukwege.
4. A tour of the film “Empire of Silence” in the stricken provinces of the DRC where the film was shot, but also in the capital Kinshasa.

## CAMPAIGN PARTNERS





# The Man Who Mends Women

## IMPACT

Belgium



France



Los Angeles



Mexico



New York



Washington



Burkina Faso



Guadeloupe



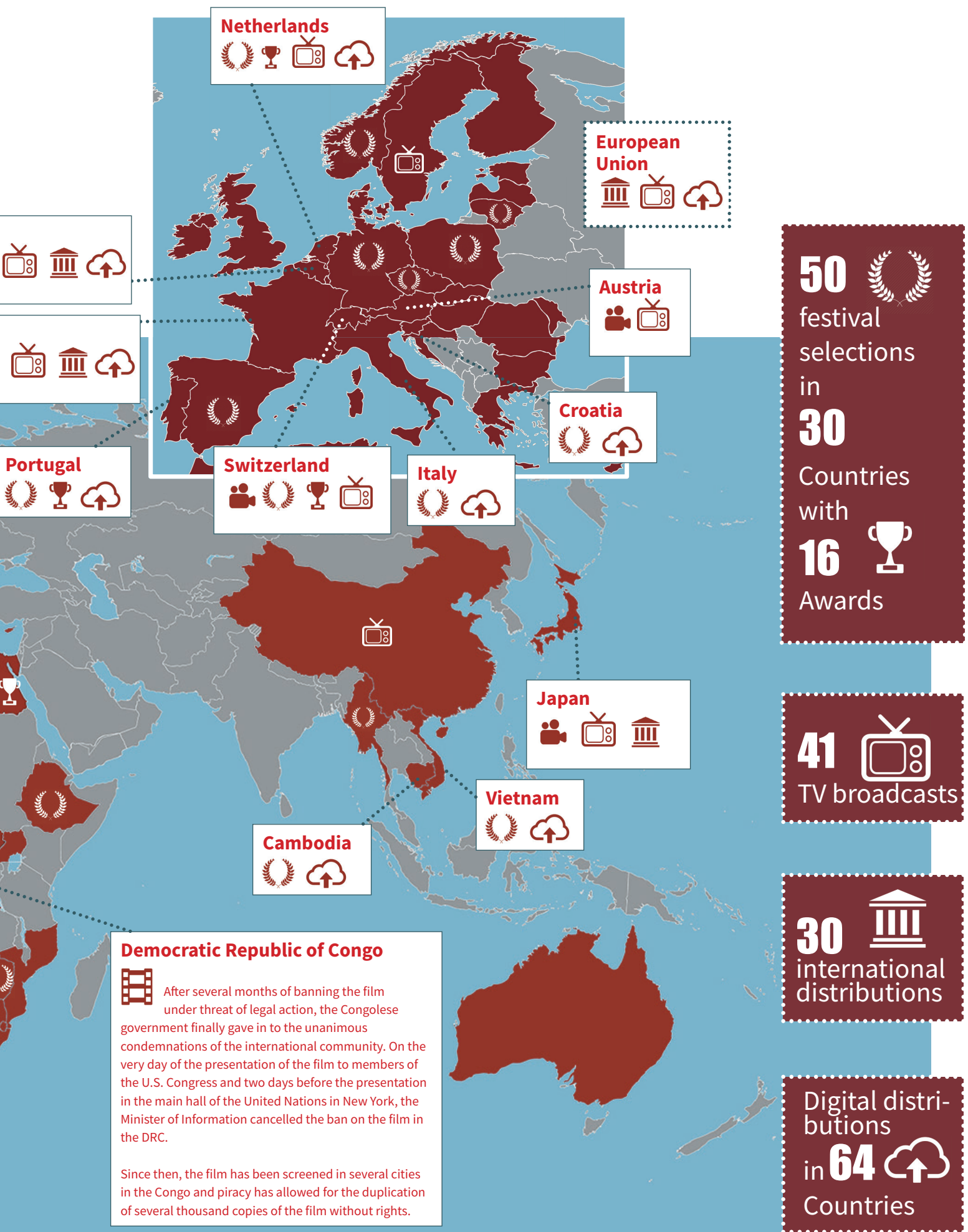
### CAPTIONS

-  Cinema release(s) with distributor
-  Festival selection(s)
-  Awards
-  TV broadcast(s)
-  International distribution
-  Digital platforms
-  Public screenings
-  Distributed countries

Subtitled in

**27** LANGUAGES





**Netherlands**  
 🏆 📺 ☁️

**European Union**  
 🏛️ 📺 ☁️

**Austria**  
 🎥 📺

**Croatia**  
 🏆 ☁️

📺 🏛️ ☁️

📺 🏛️ ☁️

**Portugal**  
 🏆 🏆 ☁️

**Switzerland**  
 🎥 🏆 🏆 📺

**Italy**  
 🏆 ☁️

**Japan**  
 🎥 📺 🏛️

**Vietnam**  
 🏆 ☁️

**Cambodia**  
 🏆 ☁️

**Democratic Republic of Congo**  
 🎬 After several months of banning the film under threat of legal action, the Congolese government finally gave in to the unanimous condemnations of the international community. On the very day of the presentation of the film to members of the U.S. Congress and two days before the presentation in the main hall of the United Nations in New York, the Minister of Information cancelled the ban on the film in the DRC.  
 Since then, the film has been screened in several cities in the Congo and piracy has allowed for the duplication of several thousand copies of the film without rights.

**50** 🏆  
 festival selections  
 in  
**30**  
 Countries  
 with  
**16** 🏆  
 Awards

**41** 📺  
 TV broadcasts

**30** 🏛️  
 international  
 distributions

Digital distri-  
 butions  
 in **64** ☁️  
 Countries





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