

2026 EDITION

 NATIONAL FORCE

The National Force Manifesto

Building a State that lasts.

A State that outlasts those who lead it.

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A State that outlasts those who lead it.

This idea runs through all four volumes of “Congo, the Trigger of Africa”, and it guides this manifesto.

“A nation that writes its discipline into its legal foundations does not leave its future to the wisdom of its leaders. It protects that future against their weakness.”

JOSHUA NKOMBE, THE RISE OF THE GIANT (VOLUME 3)

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A rich country, a weak State.

Congo has the water, the land and the minerals that a modern economy needs.

It produces about three quarters of the world's cobalt and has some 80 million hectares of arable land. Yet much of this wealth leaves the country unprocessed, and millions of Congolese live far from schools, healthcare, electricity and security.

This divide has lasted since independence because the State changes course every time its leaders change. Institutions lack continuity, decisions are rarely evaluated, and public money escapes the control of citizens. This manifesto sets out what National Force wants to change, how, and under what rules.

$\frac{3}{4}$

of world cobalt production
(USGS, 2025)

80M

hectares of arable land (FAO)

1 in 5

Congolese has access to
electricity (World Bank)



Photo: the Inga dam, Radio Okapi, CC BY 2.0.

Identify, train, unite.

National Force is a citizens' movement. It was born in 2022, when Congolese people trained all over the world offered to serve their country and no one answered them.

Identify

Congolese skills at home and in the diaspora: engineers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, entrepreneurs, former officers and former soldiers.

Train

This talent, in public management, ethics and the Master Plan.

Unite

These scattered forces into a network able to act together.



The movement rests on two divisions. The civilian division prepares the people who will be the alternative. The Defence and Security division brings together former military personnel and security professionals; it is neither a military unit nor an operational force.

Its first milestone is the 2028 presidential election, in which it backs the candidacy of Joshua Nkombe.

Five rules we apply to ourselves first.

01 Power is limited.

“No one owns it. Everyone holds it only temporarily and under constraint.” Two terms at most, a limit that no referendum can lift.

02 What is public is published.

Budgets, contracts and results are made public. “What cannot be exposed must not exist.”

03 Merit decides.

Responsibilities are given on known, verifiable criteria, in the movement as in the State.

04 Sovereignty is proven.

“Sovereignty is not declared. It is proven by the capacity to decide, finance, execute and protect.”

05 Institutions endure.

“Men are replaceable. Institutions must not be.”

Quotations: Joshua Nkombe, The Pillars of the Giant (volume 4), “The 12 laws of the Fourth Republic”.

Limit power before exercising it.

Two presidencies that had nothing in common faced the same temptation. As the end of the term approached, the question of staying in power came back, through postponement or through rewriting. The problem is not the man. It is the structure.

Others talk of a new Constitution in order to stay. We want the Fourth Republic for the opposite reason: to lock power at the source.

“Power is limited, in law and in fact. No legal, political or referendum mechanism can lift this limit.”

LAW I · THE 12 LAWS OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

This architecture was written before power is exercised. The rules will not be adjusted to personal circumstances. They will apply, including to the person who wrote them. The final decision on the country’s name belongs to the people.

— A STRONG DEMOCRACY, ON THREE PILLARS

Electoral legitimacy

The president is elected by direct universal suffrage. The term is limited, defined and cannot be changed.

Legitimacy through results

Every promise becomes a contract with the people: measurable, traceable and public.

Institutional legitimacy

Power does not reside in a man. It resides in an architecture that outlives the people who serve it.



Source: Joshua Nkombe, The Pillars of the Giant (volume 4), preface, chapters 1 to 3 and “The 12 laws of the Fourth Republic”.

COMMITMENT 1 · INSTITUTIONS THAT LAST

Every State decision must be designed to outlive its author.

WHERE WE STAND

The State changes course every time its leaders change, and institutions depend on the people who occupy them.

WHAT WE COMMIT TO

- Write the two-term limit into the Constitution, with no possibility of changing it by referendum.
- Publish an evaluation of every minister each year.
- Entrust appointments to a National Council for Selection and Merit.
- Guarantee the independence of the judiciary and protect whistleblowers.

HOW WE MEASURE IT

The share of appointments made through the Merit Council and the evaluation of every minister, published every year.

A State that does not fund its own institutions does not control them.

WHERE WE STAND

Much of the economy escapes taxation, and the budget follows mineral prices: when they rise, spending runs out of control; when they fall, investment is what gets sacrificed.

WHAT WE COMMIT TO

- Make all public revenue traceable on a digital platform, and publish mining titles, concessions and contracts.
- Write into the Constitution an automatic budget rule and an investment floor that no government can lower, drawing on Germany's debt brake and on Norway's rule limiting withdrawals from its oil fund to 3% a year.
- Separate mining revenue from the current budget: it goes into a DRC 2050 Sovereign Fund, and only the fund's returns pay for infrastructure.
- Protect future generations: any major borrowing is subject to a stricter approval rule.
- Guarantee the independence of the Central Bank.

HOW WE MEASURE IT

The share of revenue traceable online and the rate at which the investment budget is actually spent, checked by the Court of Audit.

 COMMITMENT 3 · AN ECONOMY THAT PROCESSES IN CONGO

Process instead of extracting, produce instead of exporting.

 WHERE WE STAND

The country exports its minerals raw and imports almost everything it consumes.

 WHAT WE COMMIT TO

- Raise local processing of strategic minerals from 10% to 50%, all the way to batteries.
- Modernise agriculture to reach food self-sufficiency.
- Open a single digital business window and give start-ups and SMEs three tax-free years.
- Build a transfer of skills into every foreign partnership.

 HOW WE MEASURE IT

The share of output processed in the country and the number of jobs created.

 COMMITMENT 4 · EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Education, the first revolution.

 WHERE WE STAND

Schools come first. No reform holds without women and men trained to carry it out.

 WHAT WE COMMIT TO

- Build 5,000 schools and renovate 3,000 by 2030.
- Make school free for every child.
- Train 500,000 young people in digital skills and open 500 vocational training centres by 2030.
- In addition, train 500,000 skilled workers over ten years for mining, energy, agriculture and technology.

 HOW WE MEASURE IT

Every school built or renovated made public, province by province.

COMMITMENT 5 · ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Power the Giant. Light up Africa.

WHERE WE STAND

Congo holds Africa's largest hydroelectric reserve, yet only one Congolese in five has access to electricity.

WHAT WE COMMIT TO

- Relaunch Inga and bring electricity to every province, with solar mini-grids and micro-dams.
- Make electricity free for schools and health centres, and cheap for households.
- Modernise the Banana-Matadi-Kinshasa corridor.
- Audit every project and publish its contracts.

HOW WE MEASURE IT

The electrification rate, published every year.

A strong left arm does not replace the head. It allows the head to lead.

WHERE WE STAND

Congo has not yet built a lasting national army in the full sense of the word. Its armed forces have mirrored the ills of the State that commanded them: clientelist, tribalised, predatory.

WHAT WE COMMIT TO

- Three functions, and only three: defend the country's territorial integrity, protect the constitutional order as a last resort, and secure borders, infrastructure and strategic resources.
- The monopoly of force belongs to the nation, not to one man, a clan or a faction. The army can never be deployed to keep a government in power against a lawful opposition. Those who order it and those who carry it out answer for it in court.
- The army never acts on its own initiative. To protect the constitutional order, three conditions must be met at the same time: the Constitutional Court establishes the violation, Parliament formally finds it can no longer function normally, and the High Council for Military Oversight confirms. If any one is missing, no deployment is allowed.
- A professional, unified and apolitical army: recruitment by competitive exam, mixed units, no officer commanding a unit in his home region, no serving soldier in a political party.
- A High Council for Military Oversight in three equal parts: officers chosen by their peers, lawyers chosen by the Constitutional Court, and civil society members chosen by Parliament.
- Regular pay, a minimum budget guaranteed by the Constitution, and no commercial activity for the army.

HOW WE MEASURE IT

The share of soldiers paid on time, audited military spending and the sanctions imposed, presented to Parliament every year.

COMMITMENT 7 · A DIPLOMACY THAT SERVES CONGO

A State absent from the world stage becomes the object of other people's strategies.

WHERE WE STAND

Diplomacy extends a country's strength at home. Without it, Congo is subject to decisions taken elsewhere.

WHAT WE COMMIT TO

- Choose our alliances according to Congo's interests.
- Submit every strategic agreement with a foreign power to Parliament for ratification, and publish it in full.
- Demand the withdrawal of Rwandan forces and an end to their support for the M23, as the UN Security Council requires.
- Make every partnership a transfer of technology and skills.

HOW WE MEASURE IT

The number of agreements published and ratified by Parliament, and the skills transfers secured in each partnership.

Naming the world as we see it.

WHERE WE STAND

With authenticity, Mobutu sought to break with the colonial order and give the Congolese back their dignity. The intuition was right. But it was imposed from above, in the service of one-man rule, and it did not survive its author. Even today, Congo learns a history written by others, in languages that do not come from its soil.

WHAT WE COMMIT TO

- Teach Lingala, Swahili, Kikongo and Tshiluba at school, with translated textbooks and trained teachers, so that every child begins school thinking in their own language.
- Teach our history, written by Congolese historians, from the Kingdom of Kongo to independence and up to today.
- Protect our heritage and support Congolese music, arts, fashion and film, for a living culture that travels abroad.
- No obligation on anyone's name, dress or faith. The nation's major symbolic choices will be decided by consulting the people.

HOW WE MEASURE IT

The place of national languages in the school curriculum, published every year.

Governing down to the last mile.

WHERE WE STAND

Since 2015, Congo has had twenty-six provinces. Several of them have neither the population, nor the revenue, nor the administration they need to function. “They produce bureaucracy without producing governance.”

WHAT WE COMMIT TO

- Eleven provinces instead of twenty-six, redrawn according to geographic coherence, economic viability and the capacity to govern. The boundaries will be set through a national consultation of the people concerned, then by a constitutional reform put to the people.
- A Parliament rooted in the territories: an Assembly of Territories of 290 members, one man and one woman in each of the 145 territories, elected locally and not chosen by the parties. The diaspora, recognised as the twelfth region, sits in the Senate of the Regions and the Diaspora.
- Governors appointed on merit for a first term, then elected by the provincial assemblies. None governs their home province, to shield them from family and community pressure. Rotation every five years.
- The 145 territories as the foundation of State action, each with an administrator publicly evaluated every year.

HOW WE MEASURE IT

A public evaluation of every province and every territory, every year.

What changes for you.

A programme is only worth what it changes in each person's life.

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Training that leads to a job.

- 500,000 young people trained in digital skills and 500 vocational training centres opened in the provinces by 2030.
- Internships and work-study apprenticeships in the special economic zones, with grants for technical training.
- Public posts awarded by competitive exam, on criteria everyone knows, not through connections.

FOR FARMERS

Those who feed the country must be able to live from it.

- Farm mechanisation and irrigation programmes in the rural provinces.
- Better roads and better access to markets to sell the harvest.
- Coffee, cocoa and palm oil processed in Congo, so that the value stays in the country.

FOR WOMEN

Half the country must have half the say.

- An Assembly of Territories that elects one man and one woman in every territory.
- Dedicated programmes to open industrial trades and leadership posts to women.
- Free school for every girl, as for every boy.

FOR WORKERS AND CIVIL SERVANTS

Hired for what you can do, not for who you know.

- Recruitment and promotion on merit, at every level of the administration.
- Public annual targets for every official, assessed on verifiable results.
- 500,000 skilled workers trained in ten years for mining, energy, agriculture and technology.

FOR ENTREPRENEURS

Starting a business must stop being an obstacle course.

- A single digital window to set up a business online, with no middleman.
- Three tax-free years for start-ups and SMEs, and a National Development Bank for loans.
- Specialised commercial courts and contracts that hold for everyone.

FOR THE DIASPORA

Living far from home must no longer mean being shut out.

- The diaspora recognised as the twelfth region, with its own representatives in the Senate of the Regions and the Diaspora.
- The talent bank, so that every skill is known and can be put to use.
- The skills pledge: a few days of mission a year, remotely or on the ground.

FOR FAMILIES

Healthcare, schooling and light: the least the State owes everyone.

- Universal health coverage, with 1,500 rural health centres built in the first three years.
- 5,000 new schools by 2030 and free school for every child.
- Running water and electricity in every neighbourhood, starting with Kinshasa.

FOR SOLDIERS AND VETERANS

Those who defend the country deserve its respect.

- Pay that arrives on time, so that no soldier has to live off the population.
- A programme to help veterans move into civilian work.
- Promotions on merit, public and checked, far from political or ethnic loyalties.

The first testing ground.



Greater Kinshasa has nearly 11 million inhabitants. Many of its neighbourhoods are still not connected to piped drinking water.

Kinshasa will be the first ground for applying the Master Plan. Every project there will begin with a public audit, and its contracts will be published.

10.9M

inhabitants in the urban area

21.5%

national electrification

5 lines

of commuter rail, 2030-2045

÷ 3

commuting time targeted for 2035

Water

Cut network losses, then connect the neighbourhoods that have never been served.

Energy

Connect Kinshasa to Inga and to solar power plants.

Mobility

A five-line commuter rail network, built between 2030 and 2045, starting with the busiest route.

The corridor

Modernise the Banana-Matadi-Kinshasa road and railway.

EASING PRESSURE ON THE CAPITAL

Technical ministries moved to the provinces: Agriculture in Kasai, Mines in Katanga, Public Works in Matadi. A digital land registry and a clear title for every plot. Target: cut daily commuting time by two thirds by 2035.

Sources: United Nations, World Urbanization Prospects 2025; World Bank, 2022; The March of the Giant (volume 2), ch. 9 bis. Photo: Boulevard du 30 Juin, MONUSCO/Myriam Asmani, CC BY-SA 2.0.

Prove it before governing.

Nine programmes to prove, starting today, that Congo can be governed differently.

01 · TRAIN

The National Force Academy

Free, certified online training: the Master Plan, public management, ethics, leadership.

02 · GOVERN

The government of competence

A team of professionals for each major ministry, with a plan for the first 100 days.

03 · GOVERN

The alternative budget

For every finance bill, we publish our own budget, costed line by line.

04 · SELECT

The merit exam

Our future candidates sit a public exam, marked by a partly independent panel.

05 · INTEGRITY

The integrity charter

The movement's leaders publish their assets and can be removed.

06 · PROVE

Proof projects

A solar school, a borehole, a clinic: projects funded by the diaspora, with published accounts.

07 · MONITOR

The Promise Tracker

Public tracking of the government's commitments and of how the budget is spent.

08 · CONTRIBUTE

The skills pledge

A few days of mission a year, remotely or on the ground, for the diaspora.

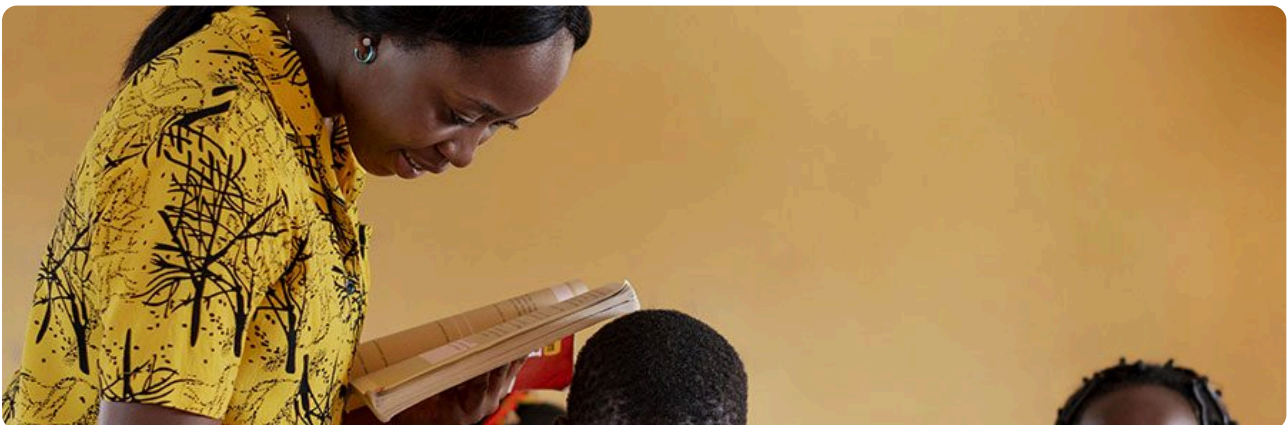
09 · UNITE

Local circles

Circles in every city, at home and abroad, with published minutes.

What every member commits to.

- 01 Act openly, within the Constitution and the laws of the Republic.
 - 02 Act only by democratic means. No member may form an armed group, carry a weapon in the movement's name or use violence or intimidation.
 - 03 Put the national interest before any private, regional or party interest.
 - 04 For the movement's leaders: publish their assets and accept that they can be removed.
 - 05 Serving military personnel cannot join, in keeping with the army's neutrality.
 - 06 Members' data is never published with their name.
-





— A WORD FROM JOSHUA NKOMBE

Why I am committed.

I am committed because I refused to accept what many have come to see as normal.

Congo's resources feed industries far beyond our borders, while millions of Congolese live without electricity, without stable work and without public services they can reach. Seeing this happen again and again does not make it acceptable.

The problem lies in how the State is organised. Public policies often stay tied to the people who announced them. When a leader leaves, part of the work leaves with them. Changing the faces at the top has not been enough. I want to work on the structure that governs the country.

Congo has the women and men it needs. Many act alone, with no common framework and no access to the positions where their experience would be useful. National Force was created to bring these skills together around a common direction.

I know this commitment exposes me. It closes doors and forces me to answer publicly for my choices. I accept that. The accountability I ask of institutions must also apply to me.

My candidacy in the 2028 presidential election will put this project before the Congolese people. They will be able to read it, debate it and decide whether it deserves their trust.

I am committed so that Congo regains control of its future.

I will not turn back.

Joshua Nkombe

FOUNDER OF NATIONAL FORCE

Where our figures come from.

Every figure in this manifesto can be checked. The commitments are drawn from the four volumes of “Congo, the Trigger of Africa”.

01 About three quarters of world cobalt production

U.S. Geological Survey, Mineral Commodity Summaries 2025, “Cobalt” chapter

doi.org/10.3133/mcs2025

02 Some 80 million hectares of arable land, about 10% of it farmed

FAO, DRC country office, press conference, October 2016

fao.org/democratic-republic-congo

03 One Congolese in five has access to electricity (21.5% in 2022)

World Bank, World Development Indicators, “Access to electricity (% of population)”

data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.ELC.ACCS.ZS?locations=CD

04 Nearly 11 million inhabitants in greater Kinshasa (10.9M)

United Nations, DESA, World Urbanization Prospects 2025

population.un.org/wup

05 The German budget rule and the Norwegian 3% rule

Joshua Nkombe, The Rise of the Giant (volume 3), “The economic constitution”

joshuankombe.com/en/books

06 The costed commitments: schools, training, health, energy, local processing

Joshua Nkombe, The Master Plan (volume 1), part three, “Vision for the future”

joshuankombe.com/en/master-plan

07 The Kinshasa commuter rail and easing pressure on the capital

Joshua Nkombe, The March of the Giant (volume 2), chapter 9 bis

joshuankombe.com/en/kinshasa

08 The architecture of institutions, the army and the territory

Joshua Nkombe, The Pillars of the Giant (volume 4), chapters 7, 10 and 15

joshuankombe.com/en/books

09 Photographs

Inga dam: Radio Okapi, CC BY 2.0. Boulevard du 30 Juin: MONUSCO/Myriam Asmani, CC BY-SA 2.0

— JOIN THE MOVEMENT

We recruit builders.

Former officer, former soldier, engineer, doctor, teacher,
entrepreneur: wherever you are in the world, your skills count.

JOIN

joshuankombe.com/en/join

WRITE TO US

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THE NATIONAL FORCE MANIFESTO · 2026 EDITION · SOURCES FOR
FIGURES: USGS, FAO, WORLD BANK, UNITED NATIONS.



SCAN TO JOIN