

KENGO wa Dondo
(Phonetic: KENgo)

ZAIRE

*State Commissioner for Foreign
Affairs and International
Cooperation (since October 1986)*

Addressed as: Mr. Minister

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
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Kengo wa Dondo, an accomplished political
infighter, is a veteran of government service and a
close adviser to President Mobutu Sese Seko. In an
October 1986 Cabinet shuffle he was demoted to
his current position after having served almost four
years as First State Commissioner (Prime
Minister)—a portfolio now assumed by Mobutu.
Kengo's key role in Zaire's faltering economy and
undaunting support for the publicly maligned IMF
program, along with Mobutu's desire to become
more involved in government operations, almost certainly led to his demotion.



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[Redacted]

Kengo holds a diploma from the National School of Administration in Kinshasa (1961)
and professional degrees in law and aviation law from the Free University of Brussels (1967).
From 1968 until 1980 he was Procurer General (equivalent to US Attorney General). He has
also been President of the Judicial Council (a cabinet-level post roughly equivalent to
Minister of Justice) and a member of the National Security Council.

[Redacted]

He remained in Brussels until he
was appointed First State Commissioner in 1982.

The son of a Polish doctor and a Rwandan mother, Kengo was born Leon Lobitsch. (He
changed his name in the early 1970s as part of Mobutu's campaign to change personal and
place names to indigenous forms.) He takes his Zairian nationality from his stepfather, who
moved him at age 7 to Mobutu's home region of Equateur. Because his stepfather was a
member of the Ngbande ethnic group (Mobutu's group), Kengo's African antecedents are
identified as Ngbande, a significant factor in cementing his close relations with the
President.

Kengo, 51, [Redacted]
[Redacted] In 1967 he visited the United States as a US International
Communications Agency student leader grantee. He speaks fluent French. Married, he has
several children. [Redacted]

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1 December 1986

[Redacted]