



# To Katanga and Back: A UN Case History

Conor Cruise O'Brien

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July 1960: The newly independent Congo is hit by the secession of its mineral rich-province Katanga, led by Moïse Tshombe and backed by Belgium and Britain.

June 1961: Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien arrives in Katanga as Special Representative of United Nations Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld, his task (under a UN resolution) to arrest and repatriate the mercenaries and foreign interests propping up Tshombe. The consequences of this mission will prove fateful for all parties.

This is the story of how a brilliant Irish diplomat found himself in Africa amid one of history's maelstroms. O'Brien reconstructs the complex, tragic, sometimes comic events of a drama in which he found himself controversially at centre stage. The result is history from the inside: a valuable study of 'the game of nations', and of the UN's unique functioning and malfunctioning.



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