

We, the undersigned civil society actors representing organizations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have formed an ad hoc coalition, *Mobilization for the Safeguarding of Congolese Sovereignty and Autonomy* (MOSSAC), to convey our message to the international community and decision-makers around the world.

Our open letter is addressed to the following organizations and their constituents:

- * United Nations Security Council;
- * United Nations Human Rights Council;
- * United Nations General Assembly;
- * African Union;
- * African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights;
- * African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights;
- * International Organisation of la Francophonie (OIF) ;
- * European Union; European Parliament;
- * European Commission;
- * Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU);
- * Individual donor states (United States, United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Germany, Japan);
- * Countries and companies that purchase minerals from Rwanda, from Rwandan companies, or from other countries and companies that purchase directly from Rwanda;
- * International Development Association of the World Bank;
- * International Monetary Fund (IMF);
- * Global Fund;
- * African Development Fund;
- * African Development Bank (AfDB);
- * International Criminal Court (ICC); and
- * International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Overview of the current situation

Since Rwanda's invasion of Zaire in October 1996 and the fall of President Mobutu in May 1997, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been suffering under a war imposed by Rwanda and Uganda, with militias scattered across the east of the country which they finance and support logistically. The [United Nations Mapping report](#), released in 2010, documented the various war crimes, crimes against humanity and instances of genocide that took place between 1993 to 2003.

Today, more than a quarter of a century after the conflict began, the death toll makes it the bloodiest war since World War II. Researchers from the International Rescue Committee estimated the [conflict-related mortality at 5.4 million](#) excess deaths for the period 1998-2007. This figure does not include deaths that occurred in 1996-1997, after 2007, or in recent months.

This ongoing catastrophe, orchestrated by Rwanda and Uganda and largely ignored – or even supported – by the international community, has been paid for with the blood of the Congolese people.

The armed extremists of the M23/AFC movement currently wreaking havoc in the eastern DRC are successors to the militias and rebellions that have been exterminating the Congolese population since 2003. During the first quarter of 2025, with the financial and logistical assistance of Rwanda, they greatly increased the intensity of killings and displacements in the provinces of North Kivu and South Kivu by occupying the provincial capitals of Goma and Bukavu and taking over mining centers from Rubaya, Masisi and Walikale in the north to Mwenga, Minembwe and others to the south. The Congo River Alliance (AFC), a political alliance which includes the M23, has [recently announced](#) that they intend to take over Kinshasa – the nation's capital.

The Rwandan army and its M23 proxies killed thousands of people in the capture of Goma alone, a number estimated to be between 2,900 and 9,500. These massacres, documented in countless press articles, continue to this day: point-blank assassinations, summary executions of children, disappearances, nighttime house searches, mass sexual violence, executions of more than 100 incarcerated women by burning them alive, targeted assassinations of activists and journalists, and human rights violations of all kinds.

The impact of this invasion and occupation has been devastating for the Congolese population. According to figures released by the DRC Prime Minister, some 7,000 people were killed in January and February, and 450,000 were left homeless after the forced evacuation and destruction of 90 displacement camps. As of February 14, 2025, UNICEF had recorded 572 cases of rape, including 170 cases of children. [Data compiled by the Norwegian Refugee Council](#) (NRC) shows that:

- across DRC, almost seven million people are internally displaced, with almost 90 per cent displaced due to conflict;
- in North Kivu and South Kivu provinces, 1,157,090 people have been newly displaced since the start of 2025 ;
- cholera cases have spiked, with families forced to drink untreated water ;
- in North and South Kivu provinces, 5,927 schools remain closed resulting in almost 2,000,000 children with no access to education;
- food security remains a major concern across DRC, which is currently the largest hunger crisis in the world, with 27.7m people experiencing high acute food insecurity.

In addition to the terrifying facts and numbers laid out above, the Congolese people are severely traumatized by the violence and threats of violence, and are unable to work, purchase needed goods and services, obtain medicines or health care, enjoy our rights to democratic decision-making, or participate in a viable economy due to the disruption of supply chains and the banking system. The current situation is entirely unsustainable, and is incompatible with daily human life

and with the long-term development of the Congolese people. The current invasion and occupation urgently needs to be brought to an end.

We, members of the Mobilization for the Safeguarding of Congolese Sovereignty and Autonomy (MOSSAC), hereby call for the immediate implementation of the following measures, which are essential to ending the violent attacks on life, liberty and sovereignty in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo:

1. Refute the false narrative used by Rwanda to hide or justify its invasion of the DRC.

The M23 claims to be fighting to protect Tutsis and Congolese of Rwandan descent from discrimination, and wishes to transform the Congo from a former failed state into a modern one. Meanwhile, Rwanda consistently denies supporting the M23 or invading the DRC. President Kagame of Rwanda claims that the war with the M23 is an internal matter for the DRC that must be resolved between the two parties to the conflict (the M23 and the DRC). Kagame and other Rwandan government spokespersons also explain that the war aims to protect Tutsis living in the DRC from mistreatment and to defend Rwanda against possible incursions by the FDLR, a rebel force composed of Hutus who fled Rwanda after the Rwandan Patriotic Front overthrew the elected government and seized power in Rwanda in 1994.

These contradictory claims have been completely refuted by witnesses and other credible sources, including the UN Security Council Group of Experts on the DRC. Their reports to the Security Council in [2022](#), [2022](#), [2023](#), [2023](#), [2024](#) and [2024](#) document the weapons, other military equipment, supplies, training, coordination, and troops on the ground that crossed the border from Rwanda to support M23 efforts. Furthermore, Rwandan military deaths and funerals organized in Rwanda attest to the Rwandan military presence in the DRC. [According to The Guardian](#), "two senior intelligence officials familiar with the RDF say actual losses to Rwanda likely number in the thousands."

Despite claims about the need to protect Tutsis living in the DRC from mistreatment and to defend Rwanda against potential FDLR incursions, no member of this community has been subjected to mistreatment as claimed by Rwanda. Neither Rwanda nor the M23 has taken steps to improve the situation of Tutsis in the DRC, nor have they significantly targeted the FDLR. In fact, the M23 and its Rwandan backers have conquered mining site after mining site in North and South Kivu provinces. Citing reports from the UN Security Council Group of Experts on the DRC, a map presented in [The Africa Report](#) shows that some 40 mining sites were already under M23 control in 2023. Once the M23 takes over the mines, it levies a "tax" on all extracted minerals. The ore from these mines is then transported to Rwanda, where it is processed and sold on the world market as a Rwandan product.

In conclusion, Rwanda's invasion and occupation of the DRC are primarily driven by Rwandan leader Paul Kagame's ambitions for power and desire for wealth. The war cannot be stopped until the false allegations are rejected by the international community and the true reasons for the invasion and occupation of the DRC's territory and resources are understood and acknowledged.

2. Cease all aid and other funding to Rwanda, which enables it to continue its invasion and occupation of the DRC, as well as the illicit extraction of its minerals.

This appeal is addressed to individual donor states (the United States, United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Germany, and Japan), as well as to the European Union, the World Bank's International Development Association, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Global Fund, the African Development Fund, and the African Development Bank (AfDB). By sending this aid to Rwanda, it can divert its resources and revenues to military operations in the DRC. In other words, it is this aid that finances the invasion and occupation of the DRC, the massacre of innocents, and the plundering of its minerals, thereby further enriching the Kagame family.

In addition to international aid, the [European Union also funds the Rwandan military](#) to protect the oil fields of the French oil company Total in Mozambique. UN investigators have determined that the military commanders paid to support Total in Mozambique are also [leading operations in DRC](#). Moreover, in February 2024, the EU and Rwanda signed a "Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Raw Materials Value Chains" in which the [Europeans gave Rwanda 900 million euros](#) to develop its infrastructure in raw materials extraction. Given that their raw materials extraction takes place illegally in DRC, this agreement appears to make the EU complicit in the illegal extraction of these "blood minerals".

In conclusion, it is urgent to stop sending aid, assistance and contractual payments to Rwanda, which provide both funding and direct military support for the ongoing war against the Congolese people.

3. End the purchase of blood minerals stolen from the DRC by Rwanda.

This appeal is addressed to the countries and companies that purchase minerals from Rwanda, from Rwandan companies, or from other countries and companies that purchase directly from Rwanda, including the [United Arab Emirates](#). By purchasing these minerals, which are known to be stolen from DRC through violent invasion and occupation, these countries and companies are complicit in the pillaging of "blood minerals", and are supporting the violation of the DRC's territorial sovereignty as well as the various war crimes and crimes against humanity that are being committed by Rwanda and its proxies in DRC.

We urgently call on all regional bodies, countries and companies purchasing these minerals to immediately:

1. stop the purchases of these minerals, whether direct or indirect;
2. place embargoes on the purchase of any products manufactured with these minerals; and
3. cancel any agreements to support Rwanda's development of these minerals supply chains, and any payments associated with the agreements – including but not limited to the European Union's 2024 Minerals Agreement with Rwanda.

4. End arms imports by Rwanda.

Any arms dealers, countries, political movements or militias that are providing weapons to Rwanda and its allies are directly enabling the slaughter of Congolese citizens, as Rwanda and its allies illegally invade, occupy and plunder the land and resources of the DRC. In addition, this disrupts the regulated international supply chains for minerals stolen from DRC, and for products based on these minerals. Finally, these weapons destabilize the entire democratic system of the DRC by enabling armed militias to operate throughout the country, and particularly in the eastern provinces.

We urgently call for:

1. all such sales of weapons to immediately cease,
2. embargoes to be placed on weapons provision to Rwanda, and to its allies operating in the DRC, by the UN Security Council and any other bodies with the authority to do so, and
3. sanctions to be placed on any arms dealers who violate the embargoes.

5. Enforce the implementation UN Security Council's Resolution 2773.

After multiple calls for action and verbal condemnations that were neither followed up nor respected by the Rwandan-backed M23 rebellion, the members of the United Nations Security Council, on February 21, 2025, formalized this call for action in a resolution aimed at ending the hostilities and security instability prevailing in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. This resolution, sponsored by France, calls on the M23 rebels to immediately cease their offensive in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and demands that Rwandan forces cease their support for the armed group and withdraw from the country. The same resolution orders a cessation of hostilities and encourages the return of dialogue within the framework of regional diplomatic initiatives.

According to the United Nations Charter, the Security Council bears primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. With the unanimous adoption of this resolution, the United Nations must now bring all its weight to bear to enforce this resolution, given Rwanda's generally recidivist behavior in the face of peace initiatives in the Great Lakes region. We urgently demand the immediate implementation of these measures, to allow the population of eastern DRC to regain peace, as is the right of any citizens of the world.

See Attachment 1 for the full text of the UNSC Resolution 2773.