

ENOUGH OF KILLINGS IN THE CONGO: LET'S AVERT ANOTHER GENOCIDE

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The territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is once again threatened by its neighbor Rwanda, as the world watches. As we speak and confirmed by UN experts, Rwanda has armed a group called [Mouvement du 23 Mars \(M23\)](#), which has taken a few positions in Congo's fifth most populated city, Goma – the economic hub of the eastern part of the country. The UN Special Representative of the Secretary General in the DRC and head of MONUSCO, Bintou Keita, confirmed yesterday that M23 has taken over Goma's airspace. This development is against international law, and deserves public outcry and condemnation. Millions of Congolese in North Kivu province [have suffered from takeover of their cities and villages by M23 over several years](#), especially over the last month. They have flooded into Goma, and those who can are evacuating from Goma as we write, to safer parts of the country.

Testifying at the UN Security Council Sunday, January 26th, Ms. Keita informed the Council that Rwandan troops along with M23 rebels crossed the Congolese border in the vicinity of Goma's international airport, leading to its closing.

The ongoing crisis in DRC is a political and [humanitarian crisis](#) of global proportions led by [Rwanda's aggression through its proxy militia, M23](#), that has fueled decade of suffering and instability in DRC, as witnessed by the following:

- As of early 2025, there were already over [2.8 million people in North Kivu Province](#) who were displaced, with many lacking access to basic necessities (e.g., shelter, food, water, and electricity).
- Within the last three months, an additional [780,000 people](#) have been forced to flee their homes.
- Recent fighting in Masisi Centre alone has displaced **102,000 individuals**.
- In Lubero, over **290,000 people** have been displaced, while another **178,000** have fled due to recent clashes in South Kivu.
- Over the last 30 years of war, over 6 million Congolese have been killed or died in Congo's conflict zones. This is a genocide of the Congolese people that must be condemned and stopped.
- The Congo is among the bottom 15 countries in the Human Development Index, and among the top seven with the highest rates of malnutrition globally.

Rwanda has sought to control northeastern Congo in order to continually have access to Congo's vast strategic mineral resources. It has been pillaging these minerals, as documented in several UN reports including the [UN Mapping Report](#), for over two decades. Through funding and supporting proxy militia groups in DRC, it is actively involved in the destabilization of eastern DRC to gain access to valuable resources like tin, tantalum, tungsten, cobalt, and gold – critical for key global industries. This mineral wealth is integral to power computers, phones, aircraft, and batteries, and therefore critical to the global economy. Controlling these resources means immense revenues for Rwanda and cheaper costs for foreign multinationals. As part of its state-building process, Congolese democratically elected officials have raised their concerns to the EU



and other stakeholders that sign contracts with the Rwandan government to access resources located in DRC. The Congolese state is willing to form normal trade relations with any country, rather than having its population exploited and decimated to access minerals cheaply.

The current escalating situation in Goma/DRC and its surroundings is once again appalling because of the ongoing humanitarian consequences it poses, including the danger to set ablaze the fragile Great Lakes Region that is yet to recover from the series of killings, including the 1990's genocides. At the January 26 emergency UN Security Council meeting, both the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, and the majority of members of the Security Council not only acknowledged the presence of Rwanda Defense Forces in DR Congo in violation of its sovereignty, they also requested their immediate withdrawal and the application of the **Luanda Roadmap** (peace accord). These actions came after the shelling of displaced population settlements, the killing on January 24th of North Kivu province's governor, Major General Peter Chirimwami, and at least 13 UN and regional peacekeepers, which by itself is a war crime.

For the Congolese Foreign Minister, Ms. Thérèse Kayikwamba Wagner, the UN's credibility is once again challenged by the recurring invasion of Congo by Rwanda. According to Ms. Wagner, the Security Council should move beyond regrets and vague diplomatic rhetoric and take swift and specific actions such as imposing an "embargo of all minerals from Rwanda, especially coltan and gold" in order to address illegal mineral exploitation in the region. Since these minerals remain the main drivers of ongoing regional conflicts, regulations such as the **2010 US Dodd-Frank Bill** will likely and significantly increase [transparency and accountability](#), deter stakeholders that rely on them, including those who continue to fuel – directly or indirectly – regional socio-political instabilities.

The recurring and ongoing incursions of Rwanda and its blatant violation of international law not only impede lasting regional peace, but it also poses significant threats to the lives of innocent civilians. While the region does not need another genocide, at the same time one genocide cannot justify another one. The credibility of the United Nations and other international actors is once again at stake as millions of Congolese and other regional populations call for their solidarity.

Congo deserves the same attention as Ukraine when it was invaded by Russia, the same attention as the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The world should not stand by and brush this off as an internal African affair. The weapons Rwanda uses to attack Congo are not made in Rwanda. The Congo, suffering from a 20-year arms embargo, is ill-equipped to fight off Rwanda's military strength.

The lives of millions of Congolese people fleeing violence are at stake. It is time for global political action, not mere proclamations.

Call to Action to Governments & Other Stakeholders Around the World:

- Suspend military aid to Rwanda immediately.
- Impose sanctions on Rwanda's political and military leaders and its proxy leaders in the DRC, including M23.
- Impose economic sanctions on Rwanda.
- Place a moratorium on coltan and cobalt traded by Rwanda.

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- Isolate Rwanda diplomatically by expelling it from international organizations and severing diplomatic ties.
- Hold Rwanda's political and military leaders accountable for war crimes and crimes against humanity through the International Criminal Court.
- Mobilize public opinion to call for an ethical response from global tech industries reliant on DRC resources.
- Encourage cities and states in the U.S. and internationally to use their influence in development and trade to pressure for meaningful change in the region.

By the [Congolese Studies Association](https://www.congolesestudies.org) (<https://www.congolesestudies.org>)

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Sources

- <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/01/drc-warring-parties-must-prioritize-civilian-protection-and-humanitarian-access-in-goma/> (Accessed on January 27, 2025)
- <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violence-democratic-republic-congo> (Accessed on January 27, 2025)
- The UN Mapping Report: https://fotcweb.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/mapping_report_en.pdf
- 2.8 million people have been displaced from North Kivu and have little-to-no access to basic necessities ([UN NEWS](#))
- 780,000 people have become displaced within the last 3 months. ([OCHA](#))
- Since the beginning of the year, escalating violence has displaced 400,000 people in the provinces of North and South Kivu. ([UNHCR](#))