Resolution on the escalation of violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo

2025/2553(RSP) - 13/02/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 443 votes to 4, with 48 abstentions, a resolution on the escalation of violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, Renew, Greens/EFA and the Left groups.

The armed rebel group M23, backed by Rwandan forces, has advanced in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), seizing Goma and escalating violence. The offensive has resulted in 3 000 deaths and displaced approximately 800 000 people, worsening an already dire humanitarian crisis. Despite M23's announcement of a ceasefire on 4 February 2025, fighting continues, with reports of M23 capturing Nyabibwe in South Kivu.

The United Nations (UN) and international observers confirm Rwanda's direct involvement, with 3 000 - 4 000 Rwandan troops supporting M23. The rebel group controls mineral-rich areas, generating an estimated EUR 288 000 per month through the illegal mineral trade. The violence has led to severe human rights violations, including mass rape, killings, and the use of child soldiers.

Protests have also erupted in Kinshasa, demanding international intervention. Meanwhile, concerns grow over a cholera and Mpox outbreak due to overcrowded displacement camps. The EU's strategic interests in raw materials and its partnerships in the region are also under scrutiny, particularly in light of Rwanda's involvement in the conflict.

Critical humanitarian crisis

Parliament strongly condemned the occupation of Goma and other territories in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) by M23 rebels and the Rwandan defence forces as an **unacceptable breach of the DRC's sovereignty and territorial integrity**. It called on Rwanda to withdraw its troops, cease support for M23 rebels, and uphold international law.

In addition, the resolution condemned the attacks on civilians, including displacement camps and populated areas in **North Kivu**. Members also condemned war crimes, mass killings, sexual violence, child soldier recruitment, and attacks on UN-mandated forces. The resolution called for accountability for perpetrators of war crimes and sexual violence.

There is a need for increased humanitarian assistance, particularly in light of the reduced US aid as well as the establishment of **humanitarian corridors** to ensure safe access to aid for displaced populations.

Economic measures and sanctions

Parliament expressed concern over the lack of coherence in the EU response to the Great Lakes region's crises and called for the **immediate suspension** of the EU-Rwanda Memorandum of Understanding on sustainable raw materials value chains until Rwanda proves that it is ceasing its interference. It called on all actors to increase transparency and to effectively ban the entry of all blood minerals into the EU. It also urged the Council to strengthen sanctions against senior M23 commanders, leaders of other armed groups and senior officials from the DRC and Rwanda.

Direct budget support to Rwanda should be **frozen** as well as military and security assistance to the Rwandan armed forces.

The Commission and all Member States are called on to ban the transfer of weapons to the Rwandan forces and M23 and to ensure greater transparency of trade in EU weapons.

Peace in the region

Members also expressed concern about the increasing presence of Chinese actors in the mining sector of the DRC as well as the consequences of Russian interference in the conflict and more widely in the region.

Lastly, Parliament welcomed the joint Southern African Development Community and East African Community peace summit held in Dar es Salaam on 8 February 2025 and expressed its full support for the Luanda and Nairobi peace processes. It called on the international community and all stakeholders to use the Addis Ababa Framework Agreement and to organise an **international conference for peace** in eastern DRC and the Great Lakes region.