



NEWS LOG

Last update:
03/08/2026

OVERVIEW - 2026



- **January 19:** The Congolese army retakes control of Uvira following the withdrawal of M23.
- **March 11:** A UNICEF humanitarian worker is killed in Goma.
- **March 25:** Reporters Without Borders documents an escalation of violence against journalists in the East. Several have been imprisoned by the M23.
- **April 19:** The government and the M23 group sign a memorandum of understanding in Switzerland to facilitate humanitarian access and release prisoners.
- **April 21:** Human rights organizations report an "unprecedented explosion" in death penalty sentences, with at least 950 individuals currently on death row.
- **May:** An Ebola outbreak is declared in the East.
- **May - June:** Opposition parties and the Catholic Church unite under the "C64" coalition to protest President Tshisekedi's moves to seek a third presidential term through constitutional revision.
- **June 10:** Human Rights Watch accuses the M23 of forcibly enlisting thousands of people including children, and detaining them in inhuman conditions.
- **June 26:** The DRC files a request with the International Court of Justice against Rwanda, alleging atrocities committed in the East through the M23 and other proxy groups.
- **June 29:** A UN commission of inquiry warns of "exceptionally grave" abuses in the East, including sexual slavery, unlawful killings and the forced recruitment of children.

All information was verified and sourced from OSINT, unless specifically mentioned otherwise.

Most of the information are from Franceinfo with Agence France Presse, Reuters and the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Please note that victims mentioned in the articles are individuals who are not directly participating in hostilities, unless explicitly stated otherwise. In principle, the DCCI-ICCD does not record KIA and WIA, when engaged validly under IHL.

DCCI-ICCD – DRC – NEWS LOG

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31 CIVILIANS MASSACRED BY REBELS IN NORTHEAST

On July 28, 2026, local and security sources reported that ADF rebels killed at least 31 civilians in several attacks in northeast Democratic Republic of Congo. Mambasa civil society president Jospin Paluku confirmed the deaths occurred between July 22 and July 27 in the Babila Babombi chieftaincy. At least 18 victims were killed during a single night in the mining town of Njiapanda-Bela. Civil society leader Muhindo Mamboro Peresi stated that over 190 civilians have died in the area since January. The Ugandan and Congolese armies maintain a joint operation named Shujaa but have failed to end the violence. Farmers reported being forced to pay protection taxes to the rebels or to face execution.

DRC REPATRIATES CITIZENS FLEEING XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

On July 18, 2026, the Democratic Republic of Congo's foreign ministry announced the repatriation of a first group of 121 citizens from South Africa, where foreigners have been targeted by a wave of violence. South Africa has been shaken for weeks by demonstrations and unrest targeting undocumented migrants, prompting tens of thousands to flee. At least 150,000 foreigners from several African countries, including Ghana, Nigeria, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda and Zimbabwe, have left the country in recent weeks. “121 Congolese nationals, including women and children,” landed in Kinshasa aboard a “first voluntary repatriation flight,” the foreign ministry said in a statement, adding that the operation followed “xenophobic violence” that began in early May. South Africa, the continent's largest economy, has long been a destination for African workers, both documented and undocumented, but has faced recurrent waves of xenophobic violence since 2008, when dozens of migrants were killed and thousands displaced. About 3 million foreigners, 5.1% of the population, live in the country, according to the national statistics agency. South African police arrested 69 people after an anti-migrant demonstration degenerated into looting and violence in the south of the country.

RDC OPPOSITION AND CHURCH UNITE AGAINST TSHISEKEDI THIRD-TERM

On July 3, 2026, opposition parties in the Democratic Republic of Congo called for street protests demanding President Félix Tshisekedi's resignation, accusing him of seeking to amend the constitution to stay beyond his two-term limit. The opposition, which had initially called for a protest on Wednesday in Kinshasa, postponed its call to July 22 after a dialogue proposal from Burundian President Evariste Ndayishimiye, current chair of the African Union. President since 2019 and nicknamed “Fatshi,” Tshisekedi, 63, is constitutionally required to step down at the end of 2028. In early May he confirmed intentions long suspected by the opposition, saying “if the people wish me to have a third term, I will accept”. The opposition coalition C64, formed in mid-May, includes businessman and exiled former Katanga governor Moïse Katumbi, who won 18% of the vote in 2023; former minister Delly Sesanga; and Martin Fayulu, who won 5% in 2023 and maintains victory was stolen from him in the disputed 2018 election. Sesanga and Fayulu were both injured on June 12 in Kinshasa when clashes broke out between their supporters and pro-government militants and police during a rally against what they called a “constitutional coup”. The UN condemned the death of “at least one protester”.

UN WARNS OF 'EXCEPTIONALLY GRAVE' ABUSES IN EASTERN DRC

On June 29, 2026, an independent UN commission of inquiry said in Geneva it had received information on violence of “exceptional gravity” in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, including sexual violence, unlawful killings and forced recruitment of children. Presenting to the Human Rights Council, commission chair Arnould Akodjenou said investigators received “deeply concerning testimony” about children, conflict-related sexual violence including “sexual slavery,” forced recruitment, unlawful killings, arbitrary arrests and attacks on schools and health facilities. The commission, created by the Human Rights Council to investigate alleged violations of international humanitarian and human rights law in the two provinces, said its inquiry remains preliminary and it cannot yet draw conclusions on the nature or scale of the violations. It said it had also received reports of obstruction of humanitarian access, mistreatment in detention, and threats against human rights defenders and journalists documenting abuses, compounded by mass displacement and the Ebola outbreak's impact on health, education and trade.

DRC'S MINE AT THE CENTER OF US-CHINA RIVALRY

On June 26, 2026, a report highlighted the DRC's major role in the global race for critical minerals, centered on the Kamoa Copper S.A. mine near Kolwezi, which has a copper grade of 2.8%, 4 times the world average. With a joint venture between Canada's Ivanhoe Mines, China's Zijin Mining and the Congolese State (20%), it aims for 400,000 tonnes of copper by 2027. Kamoa Director Annebel Oosthuizen stated the world will need to “nearly triple” copper production in the coming years. DRC Minister of Economy Daniel Mukoko confirmed the mining sector “drives the entire Congolese economy”. A US-DRC strategic partnership signed in December and a memorandum of understanding between Glencore and US consortium Orion Critical Mineral Consortium for a potential 40% stake in Glencore's DRC assets reflect Washington's push to reduce Chinese dominance, estimated at 70% of mining activity.

DRC FILES GENOCIDE CASE AGAINST RWANDA

On June 26, 2026, the DRC filed a request with the International Court of Justice in The Hague against Rwanda for alleged atrocities committed in eastern DRC from 1996 to 2026. The DRC invoked the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, citing a “genocidal campaign” targeting primarily Hutus as well as Nyindus, Bembes, Legas, Nandes, Hundes and Bashis ethnic communities. The DRC accused Rwanda of acting through its own forces and armed groups under its control, including the M23.

MORE WAR WOUNDED AMID EBOLA OUTBREAK

On June 16, 2026, the ICRC reported that the number of war wounded in eastern DRC has risen by 30 percent since an Ebola outbreak was declared on May 15. ICRC Medical Coordinator in DRC Moussa Badji stated that surgical teams are under constant pressure from weapons injuries despite the health crisis. Most of the 303 wounded patients were recorded in North-Kivu and South-Kivu, particularly in the Hauts-Plateaux region where the M23 group is active. Security sources reported violent clashes near Minembwe and Mikenge involving the Congolese army, M23 and local militias. Explosions from drones account for 18 percent of injuries treated by the ICRC while ADF massacres continue in Ituri.

DRC SENATE ADOPTS TEXT OPENING WAY FOR TSHISEKEDI THIRD TERM

On June 16, 2026, the Senate adopted a bill on the organization of referendums that could allow President Félix Tshisekedi to seek a third term. The text, already passed by the Assembly where the majority coalition holds power, would allow for constitutional revisions. Opponents denounced the move as a constitutional coup and held a rally in Kinshasa which resulted in clashes with police and pro-government militants. President Félix Tshisekedi, whose current term ends in 2028, stated he would accept a third term.

SEVERAL OPPONENTS INJURED IN PROTESTS AGAINST 3RD PRESIDENTIAL TERM

On June 12, 2026, several Congolese opponents were injured in Kinshasa during a rally against a proposed constitutional change that could allow President Félix Tshisekedi a 3rd term. Police dispersed the C64 coalition gathering after clashes between opposition and progovernment militants. Several activists were injured, with some who claimed bullet wounds. The current Constitution limits the president to 2 mandates but a new bill could allow revisions in case of major institutional dysfunction. Joseph Kabila urged citizens to oppose the change.

THOUSANDS FORCIBLY ENLISTED IN M23 DETENTION CAMPS

On June 10, 2026, Human Rights Watch accused the M23 antigovernment group of forcibly enlisting thousands of people in eastern RDC and detaining them in inhuman

conditions. The group, which is supported by Kigali, seized the major cities of Goma and Bukavu in early 2025. HRW based its report on interviews with 102 former detainees and dozens of other sources who described victims abducted from streets, homes, churches or schools. Some captives as young as 12 were forced to join M23 under death threats after receiving military and ideological training. Detainees suffered beatings, extreme overcrowding, dehydration and famine. Some were executed. Witnesses identified senior M23 officers alongside numerous Rwandan instructors and guards wearing Rwanda Defence Force uniforms. The NGO estimates that hundreds or more people died in these camps.

TONS OF PILLAGED COLTAN LAUNDERED THROUGH RWANDA

On June 10, 2026, an investigation by Global Witness revealed that hundreds of tons of coltan pillaged by the M23 armed group in eastern RDC are laundered in Rwanda for international export. With support from Kigali, M23 seized the Rubaya mining town in April 2024 which supplies 15% of coltan production. UN experts reported that approximately 120 tons of coltan were exported monthly to Rwanda between May and October 2024. The group generates large revenues from taxes on mineral production and trade. Global Witness established the complicity of Rwandan officials in smuggling where minerals are mixed with local production. Bags are sometimes tagged by buyers rather than Rwandan mining, oil and gas officials. This coltan may reach global brands such as Microsoft, Vodafone, Sony, Amazon, Nvidia, LG Display, Ericsson, Toyota and Apple.

7 PEOPLE SLAUGHTERED BY ADF NEAR BENI

On May 31, 2026, clashes broke out in Beni after ADF rebels linked to the Islamic State killed at least 7 people in the outskirts of the city. During the night of May 30, fighters from the Allied Democratic Forces made an incursion between Ngadi and Mavivi in North Kivu. Lieutenant Marc Elongo, spokesperson for the Congolese army, announced that 6 citizens were slaughtered and 1 soldier was KIA. A member of a local civil society organization, specified that the rebels entered a Pygmy camp in Ngadi around 23:00 and murdered 6. Local sources reported that a famous regional artist was among the victims. Survivor Baraka Gelote described escaping with his child while rebels executed other camp residents. Residents demonstrated in Beni blaming the army which they accused of reacting slowly. Police used tear gas to disperse the crowd.

MILITARY CLASHES AND EBOLA EPIDEMIC INTENSIFY

Intense clashes escalated between Kinshasa forces alongside local militias and the M23 group in Katoyi, North Kivu. In the Tshopo province, Vice-Governor Didier Lomoyo reported mortar fire targeting the strategic Kisangani airport, although a police source stated that 2 drones were intercepted. The Congolese military is currently deploying Turkish and Chinese attack drones to strike M23 positions. Fighting has also spread to several areas in South Kivu, particularly near Minembwe and Kabare. World Health Organization Director Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus warned that ongoing fighting involving the M23, ADF and community militias is hindering the medical response and causing mass population displacements. Medical teams at

the Rwampara hospital in Ituri lack sufficient resources while the epidemic spreads to the Kivu provinces. On May 27, 2026, Ugandan Ministry of Health official Dr Diana Atwine announced the immediate closure of the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo. This measure follows the declaration of a Bundibugyo Ebola variant in the Ituri province, for which no vaccine or treatment exists.

EBOLA SPREADS TO SOUTH KIVU PROVINCE

On May 21, 2026, authorities reported the first Ebola transmission cases in South Kivu while the health response faced obstacles in Ituri. M23 spokesperson Lawrence Kanyuka confirmed a positive case in Kabare territory. In Ituri, a riot erupted at Rwampara hospital where youth burned isolation tents to recover a deceased patient's body. Kigonze displacement site manager Désiré Grodya warned that 16,000 displaced people lack basic hand washing facilities. Border hygiene manager Aimé Prospère implemented temperature checks at Bunia airport.

OPPOSITION COALITION CHALLENGES CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION

On May 19, 2026, major opposition parties in Democratic Republic of Congo launched the C64 coalition to block potential constitutional changes. During a press conference in Kinshasa, leaders including Martin Fayulu, Moïse Katumbi, Augustin Matata Ponyo, Delly Sesanga and Jean Marc Kabund united against attempts by President Félix Tshisekedi to extend his rule. The current constitution limits presidents to 2 terms, which for Tshisekedi, ends in 2028. A proposed bill in the National Assembly would allow revisions. The C64 labeled this a grave threat to national stability. Although President Félix Tshisekedi suggested delaying the 2028 election due to the M23 conflict, the coalition insisted he must leave power at the end of his mandate.

EBOLA OUTBREAK AMIDST WAR

On May 19, 2026, the Ebola epidemic spread across eastern Democratic Republic of Congo where numerous armed groups operate. The virus focus originated in Mongbwalu within the gold rich Ituri province which faces violence between the Hema and Lendu communities. While the Codeco militia defends Lendu interests, the CRP group aligns with the Hema people. Allied Democratic Forces rebels are linked to Islamic State. The M23 group supported by Rwanda also controls large areas which complicates the health response. ICRC Head of Delegation François Moreillon urged combatants to allow humanitarian access. A first contamination case was confirmed in Goma which has been under M23 control since January 2025. M23 governors in North and South Kivu announced health tracking teams and reinforced sanitary measures to manage the crisis within their parallel administration. M23 spokesperson Lawrence Kanyuka reported that no new cases were registered.

EBOLA OUTBREAK DECLARED IN ITURI

On May 15, 2026, an Ebola outbreak was announced in Ituri province where laboratories confirmed related deaths have occurred. There are currently 246 suspected cases in the Mongwalu and Rwampara zones. Early laboratory tests analyzed in Kinshasa suggest an ebolavirus “non-Zaire” strain, meaning current vaccines and treatments may not apply. Suspected cases are also pending in Bunia, a city of 300,000 residents. This event marks the 17th Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The last outbreak in August 2025 killed 34 people before being declared eradicated in December.

M23 REBELS WITHDRAW FROM STRATEGIC TOWNS

On May 11, 2026, the Rwanda backed M23 armed group withdrew from several localities in South Kivu. Administrative official Paul Fikiri Mudeda and army spokesperson Lieutenant Reagan Mbuyi confirmed that rebels left Sange, Kabunambo, Mutarule and Bwegera. These fighters returned to previous positions held before the December capture of Uvira. Local residents celebrated as pro government “wazalendo” militiamen entered the towns. Although M23 and Kinshasa agreed in Switzerland to facilitate humanitarian aid and release prisoners, conflict persists in eastern regions where M23 has seized vast territory since 2021.

COMMUNAL MILITIA MASSACRE KILLS 69

On May 9, 2026, reports confirmed that at least 69 people, mostly civilians, were killed during an attack by the Codeco militia in Ituri province. This massacre followed an April 28 offensive by the armed group Convention pour la révolution populaire (CRP) against the Congolese army positions near Pimbo in Djugu territory. Civil society leader Dieudonné Losa stated that 19 militiamen and soldiers were among the dead, while several bodies remained abandoned near Bassa village. The CRP was formed by Thomas Lubanga, a former warlord previously convicted for recruiting child soldiers. The Hema community representative group Ente qualifies the event as a massacre and urged against retaliation between the Hema and Lendu communities.

CIVILIANS INJURED IN EASTERN DRONE STRIKE

Reports indicate that last week, a drone attack injured at least 25 civilians at a market in Mushaki. Victims, including a 2 year old girl, were treated at Ndosho hospital in Goma. Witnesses described the explosion that hit residential areas far from the front lines. The Congolese army recently acquired Turkish and Chinese attack drones to target M23 positions in the east. M23 also utilizes drones and recently targeted Kisangani airport.

REBEL ATTACKS KILL 36 CIVILIANS

On May 07, 2026, local sources reported that Allied Democratic Forces rebels killed at least 36 people during several attacks in the Northeast region. Between May 5-6, the group targeted isolated villages near the Beni-Mbau locality in North Kivu. Beni Mbau Civil Society President Kinso Kituho confirmed 24 deaths in the villages of Manzungu, Musamba, Wasafi and Mangambo. On May 7, rebels armed with guns and machetes attacked Biakato, in Ituri. Biakato Civil Society Head Mendela Musa stated that 15 bodies were recovered including 11 men, 3 women and 1 child. The joint Shujaa operation involving Congolese and Ugandan armies has failed to end the violence in these forest areas.

TSHISEKEDI CONSIDERS THIRD PRESIDENTIAL TERM

On May 06, 2026, President Félix Tshisekedi announced he would accept a 3rd term if requested by the people through a constitutional referendum. Speaking at a press conference in Kinshasa, the 62 year old leader also mentioned a possible delay for the 2028 presidential election if the conflict in the East persists. He argued that voting cannot occur without the participation of the North Kivu and South Kivu provinces. While the opposition accuses him of maneuvers to stay in power, Félix Tshisekedi claimed his goal is to serve the country. He attributed the ongoing war to Rwanda for supporting M23 rebels. In December, an agreement signed in Washington under US President Donald Trump established a partnership to supply strategic minerals to American industry in exchange for infrastructure and military support. US sanctions were recently applied to his predecessor Joseph Kabila for supporting the M23.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ACCUSES REBELS OF CRIMES

On May 05, 2026, Amnesty International released a report accusing Allied Democratic Forces rebels of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Ituri and North Kivu. Based on 71 interviews conducted between October 2025 and February 2026, the document details systematic attacks against civilians as part of an offensive in the region. The group is responsible for kidnappings, forced labor and the recruitment of children for combat and other activities related to the armed group. According to the report, women and girls are regularly subjected to sexual slavery, forced conversions to Islam and forced marriages. Families of 7 hostages kidnapped in 2025 reported paying ransoms between 100 and 10,000 dollars for their release. Despite the joint operation by the Congolese and Ugandan armies since 2021, the rebels continue to target civilians for supplies and as retaliation for military operations.

US SANCTIONS KABILA

On April 30, 2026, the United States sanctioned former President Joseph Kabila for destabilizing the DRC through support for the M23 and the Congo River Alliance (AFC). US Secretary of the Treasury Scott Bessent and State Department Spokesperson Thomas Pigott confirmed that Joseph Kabila is now blacklisted. Joseph Kabila, who ruled from

2001 to 2019 after the assassination of his father Laurent-Désiré Kabila, was recently sentenced to death in absentia by Congolese justice. While current President Félix Tshisekedi leads the nation, Joseph Kabila allegedly appeared in the M23 stronghold of Goma last year.

NEW PARAMILITARY UNIT IN MINES

On April 27, 2026, the General Inspectorate of Mines announced the creation of a special paramilitary unit called the mining guard to protect mineral exploitation in the RDC. Authorities stated that this 100 million dollar program is funded through strategic partnerships with the United States and United Arab Emirates. The RDC produces 70% of the world's cobalt and holds vast reserves of coltan, copper and lithium. The IGM plans to deploy 20,000 guards across 22 provinces by 2028 with the first contingent starting in December 2026. This initiative follows a peace agreement between the RDC and Rwanda, to end conflict with the M23 supported by Kigali. Paramilitaries from companies linked to American businessman Erik Prince already support the Congolese army. This force faced criticism, as it was denounced as aiming to ensure supplies for American industry while competing with China in the sector.

UN CONVOY REPATRIATES REFUGEES FROM BURUNDI

On April 23, 2026, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced the return of 470 Congolese refugees from Burundi in the first of several planned convoys. The group departed from Busuma camp in 15 buses and crossed the border into the Democratic Republic of Congo between 17:30 and 18:00. UNHCR representative in Burundi Brigitte Mukanga Eno stated that returns are only authorized for secured areas like Uvira and its surroundings. Over 100,000 people originally fled to Burundi following a M23 offensive in December. While an agreement signed in Washington under United States pressure pushed the rebels to withdraw from Uvira, the conflict remains active in other parts of the East. The UNHCR plans to organize further convoys every Tuesday and Thursday to repatriate approximately 1,000 people per week.

OBSTETRIC VIOLENCE IN KINSHASA HOSPITALS

On April 23, 2026, the AFP reported that women in public hospitals in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, described severe abuse during childbirth, including being struck with a metal instrument, pinned down, slapped and sutured without anaesthesia. The report said a viral video of a naked woman screaming after delivery sparked nationwide outrage, after a doctor was seen forcing treatment on her and hitting her when she resisted. The doctor was convicted and given a suspended 2-month sentence and the State was ordered to pay \$2,500 in damages. Prime Minister Judith Suminwa and Denise Tshisekedi, the president's wife, condemned the acts. Afia Mama association president Anny Modi stated that such violence is often normalized as a "means of saving lives". Health Minister Samuel Roger Kamba acknowledged recurring physical and verbal abuse.

PRESIDENTIAL PARTY CALLS FOR CONSTITUTIONAL OVERHAUL

On April 22, 2026, the leader of the ruling UDPS party declared that the current constitution fails to meet the expectations of the population, reigniting debates over potential modifications. President Félix Tshisekedi is currently serving his second term which is scheduled to end in 2028. Opposition parties view these maneuvers as a constitutional coup to bypass the 2 term limit established in 2006 under former President Joseph Kabila. Although the President previously cited the war in the East as a reason to pause reform discussions, the “Union sacrée” alliance holds a large parliamentary majority capable of bypassing a referendum with a 3/5 vote.

ALARMING RISE IN DEATH PENALTY SENTENCES

On April 21, 2026, a collective of NGOs reported an unprecedented explosion in death penalty sentences in the Democratic Republic of Congo following the 2024 lifting of a moratorium. Data from the NGO Ensemble contre la peine de mort (ECPM) shows sentences rose from 122 in 2023 to 480 in 2024 and 344 in 2025. Currently at least 950 individuals are on death row. Congolese Member of Parliament Christelle Vuanga noted that many convictions for organized crime result from summary trials where legal assistance is often lacking. Investigators visited 19 overcrowded prisons finding inmates in extreme precariousness. While no official executions have been confirmed since 2003, human rights groups denounce the political instrumentalization of the death penalty within an opaque judicial system.

HUMANITARIAN AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND REBELS

On April 19, 2026, the Democratic Republic of Congo government and the M23 armed group agreed to facilitate humanitarian aid and release prisoners within 10 days following talks in Switzerland. Both parties committed to protect civilians and vital infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and water reserves. This agreement aims to provide sustained aid to the conflict in eastern region where the M23 has seized territory since 2021, with support from Rwanda. A memorandum of understanding was also signed to implement ceasefire verification mechanisms.

CENTRAL BANK BANS CASH DOLLAR TRANSACTIONS

On April 9, 2026, Central Bank of Congo Governor André Wameso announced that all cash transactions in foreign currencies will be prohibited by April 9, 2027. According to a communique signed by André Wameso, such transactions will only be permitted through scriptural bank operations. The CBC also banned commercial banks from importing physical foreign currency notes because the central bank will assume exclusive import rights. This policy aims to secure supplies while fighting money laundering and terrorism financing. Congolese economist and majority party deputy Godé Mpoy criticized the move as “economicide” given

the nation's low banking coverage. The US dollar has dominated the local economy since the 1990s when inflation hit 2,000 percent under President Mobutu Sese Seko.

DANGEROUS DECLINE IN HUMANITARIAN SAFETY

On April 8, 2026, UN humanitarian operations chief Tom Fletcher announced that 25 aid workers were killed in the Democratic Republic of Congo over the last 3 years. Speaking at a Security Council meeting regarding the protection of civilians, Tom Fletcher reported a total of 326 humanitarian deaths worldwide in 2025 and over 1,010 since 2023. He identified the DRC as one of the most dangerous locations alongside Gaza, the West Bank, Sudan and South Sudan.

ADF REBELS MASSACRE 43 IN NORTHEASTERN LOCALITY

On April 2, 2026, the Congolese army announced that ADF rebels linked to Islamic State killed 43 people in the northeastern region. The attack took place on April 1 in Bafwakoia, Ituri province. Lieutenant Jules Tshikudi Ngongo, spokesperson for the Congolese army in the province, confirmed that 44 houses were burned. Jospin Paluku, a representative of a local civil society organization and the Kivu Security Tracker (KST) reported a provisional toll of at least 35 civilians killed. Assailants surprised the population in their sleep. Victims were killed by firearms or decapitated. Jospin Paluku stated that several inhabitants were kidnapped. The ADF is known to forcibly recruit women and children to serve as human shields in isolated forest camps. Since 2021, the Ugandan army has been involved in the joint operation Shujaa in North Kivu and Ituri. Residents and civil society organizations continue to criticize the slow military response after these repeated massacres.

M23 WITHDRAW FROM SEVERAL EASTERN LOCALITIES

On March 26, 2026, local and humanitarian sources announced that the M23 armed group abandoned several localities in the Lubero territory without combat. M23 fighters withdrew from Kipese and villages near Lake Edward during the night of March 23 to March 24. The Kivu Security Tracker (KST) confirmed that M23 left at least 12 villages in the previous days. Pro-Kinshasa militias occupied some areas after the departure. While M23 members claimed this was a simple rotation, the movement follows a Washington meeting on March 17 and March 18 where delegates from the DRC and Rwanda discussed measures for a peace agreement. Combat persists near Minembwe in South Kivu as the region remains ravaged by conflicts for over 30 years.

VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS ESCALATES IN EASTERN REGIONS

On March 25, 2026, Reporters without borders reported that violence and pressure against journalists increased following conflict intensification in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Since January 2025, at least 8 journalists were imprisoned by M23 or military intelligence. Two journalists were held in containers alongside 80 detainees. M23

imposed ideology training on 4 journalists while censorship by the Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel et de la communication (CSAC) grew in Kinshasa. According to the Union nationale de la presse congolaise (UNPC), approximately 90 journalists fled their homes between 2023 and early 2025. This climate of fear has led some reporters to stop investigating certain facts to ensure their survival.

SEVENTEEN CONGOLESE MIGRANTS DROWN NEAR COMOROS COAST

On March 19, 2026, Interior Minister Mohamed Ahamada Assoumani announced that at least 17 Congolese migrants drowned after being abandoned by smugglers. The victims were part of a group attempting to reach the French department of Mayotte from the Comoros archipelago. UN representative James Tsok Bot noted that while such movements have occurred for 5 years, this is the first time bodies have been recovered. Survivors including a 25 year old man reported that smugglers dropped them on a sandbank at Mitsamiouli claiming they had arrived in Mayotte. 30 people survived while 4 others are missing. The survivor recounted fleeing the M23 conflict in North Kivu, DRC, and traveling through Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, before a 7 day boat journey.

ADF REBELS STRIKE GOLD MINING SITES IN ITURI PROVINCE

On March 15, 2026, ADF rebels linked to the Islamic State attacked gold mining sites near Muchacha in northeastern Ituri province. Authorities reported several deaths and the destruction of facilities by fire after the overnight assault. Police administrator Matadi Muyapandi suspected ADF rebels were assisted by Mai-Mai militias during the raid on sites where Chinese nationals operated a mine. Civil society leader John Vuleveryo confirmed 2 civilian bodies were recovered but noted the death toll could rise due to limited access. 7 soldiers were wounded in an ambush while attempting to repel the attackers and several people were kidnapped. Following the violence, Chinese nationals fled toward Bandengaido and local residents were displaced.

FRENCH HUMANITARIAN WORKER KILLED

On March 11, 2026, UNICEF employee Karine Buisset was killed by a drone strike on a building in Goma. MONUSCO confirmed that Buisset and 2 other civilians died in the Himbi neighborhood attack. Security sources suggest her residence was hit by error while targeting M23 officials nearby. M23 accused the DRC army, while Kinshasa announced an investigation. Emmanuel Macron, Antonio Guterres, Stéphane Dujarric and the French foreign ministry expressed indignation. The French national anti-terrorism prosecutor opened a war crime investigation into the death of Karine Buisset. The investigation for murder was entrusted to the French Central Office for Combating Crimes Against Humanity (OCLCH).

AIR STRIKES HIT GOMA

On March 11, 2026, air strikes targeted several sites in Goma, an eastern city held by the M23 since January. Humanitarian sources reported several people killed during the previous night. One humanitarian worker described hearing two explosions preceded by drone noises. Kinshasa forces regularly conduct long range drone strikes against M23 positions from hundreds of kilometers away. M23 spokesperson Willy Ngoma was previously killed in a drone strike near the Rubaya mining site.

DEADLY LANDSLIDE IN A M23 MINE AND PARK ATTACK

On March 3, 2026, gunmen killed 5 staff members of the Upemba National Park at Lusinga according to Yves Milan Ngangay, the director of the ICCN. On the same day, a major landslide at a M23 controlled mine in Rubaya killed over 200 people, including 70 children, as reported by the Ministry of Mines. Independent verification remains difficult due to cut telecommunications and lack of access.

US SANCTIONS ON RWANDAN MILITARY

On March 2, 2026, the United States imposed sanctions on the Rwandan Defense Forces (RDF) and 4 senior officers for providing direct operational support to M23 rebels. The State Department announced that these sanctions include freezing assets and prohibiting US citizens from conducting business with the targeted individuals. This decision follows M23 offensives in Uvira and North Kivu which were aided by Rwandan forces. On March 6, 2026, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced that Washington will refuse visas to several Rwandan officials. The measures target individuals responsible for undermining peace in the Great Lakes region by supporting M23.

ARMY DRONE STRIKES NEAR RUBAYA

On February 25, 2026, the Congolese army used drones to strike M23 positions near the strategic mining site of Rubaya, which produces up to 30% of the world's coltan. Local sources confirmed that militias allied with the army captured the town of Kazinga. An M23 official and an anonymous resident reported that the strikes caused panic in Rubaya on February 24. Kinshasa uses Chinese and Turkish drones to maintain air superiority.

CEASEFIRE MONITORING PREPARATION IN UVIRA

On February 24, 2026, Monusco announced that a joint evaluation team arrived in Uvira to prepare for a ceasefire monitoring mechanism. This mission, involving the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), aims to assess security and logistics before a permanent ceasefire is implemented. The M23 withdrew its troops from Uvira in January, claiming to place the city under international responsibility. Monusco stated that future deployments would depend on security guarantees.

BURUNDI BORDER REOPENS AT KAVIMVIRA

On February 23, 2026, the land border between the DRC and Burundi reopened at the Kavimvira post near Uvira. South Kivu Governor Jean-Jacques Purusi and an anonymous Burundian migration agent confirmed the reopening, which follows a two-month closure caused by an M23 offensive in December. Over 80.000 people fled to Burundi during the fighting. A resident of the Busuma refugee camp expressed a desire to return home due to inhumane conditions. Approximately 5000 Burundian soldiers remain deployed in South Kivu to support the Congolese army against the M23 and its allied militias. M23 previously took Bukavu in February 2025.

DRC AND M23 ACCUSE EACH OTHER OF BREAKING CEASEFIRE

On February 20, 2026, the Congolese government and the M23 rebel group traded accusations of violating a ceasefire proposed by Angola in eastern DRC. Kinshasa accused M23 of attacking its positions in North and South Kivu provinces and undermining the peace process. M23, in turn, blamed Congolese forces for ceasefire violations. Local sources reported renewed clashes near Minembwe, South Kivu, where Congolese troops backed by local militias and Burundian soldiers, faced M23-affiliated groups. The region remains volatile.

FRAGILE CALM AFTER CEASEFIRE PROPOSAL

On February 19, 2026, fighting between Congolese forces and M23 rebels eased in eastern DRC. Local sources noted a relative calm in Minembwe and Sange, South Kivu, where clashes had recently occurred. Residents of Lemera began returning home after morning skirmishes. The region, plagued by over 30 years of conflict, has seen repeated ceasefire violations. Analysts suggest US pressure for access to strategic minerals may influence a temporary truce, but conditions for a permanent peace remain unmet.

KINSHASA ACCEPTS CEASEFIRE IN “PRINCIPLE”

On February 13, 2026, the DRC government announced it “accepted the principle” of a ceasefire in eastern DRC, following Angola’s proposal for hostilities to end on February. Kinshasa did not confirm a start date, while M23 accused the government of “manipulation” and delaying tactics. The rebel group claimed Congolese forces continued “indiscriminate attacks” despite the announcement. Fighting persisted in South Kivu’s Minembwe highlands, where Congolese troops and allied militias battled M23-affiliated groups. Kinshasa demanded a strict freeze on military positions and an end to external support for armed groups. The UN’s Monusco mission prepared to deploy reconnaissance flights from Goma airport.

DRONE ATTACK TARGETS KISANGANI AIRPORT

On January 31–February 1, 2026, the strategic airport of Kisangani, in Tshopo province, was targeted by a drone attack. Local authorities reported that 8 enemy drones were

neutralized before reaching their target, with no casualties. Witnesses described explosions near the airport until 02:00 on February 1, prompting some residents to flee. The provincial government assured that the situation was under control and urged displaced residents to return. The airport, used by both civilian and military aircraft, is crucial for Congolese army drone and airstrike operations against M23 and Rwandan forces over 400 km away. The M23 rebel group claimed responsibility later for the attack, stating it had destroyed the Congolese military's drone command center.

SOUTH AFRICA TO WITHDRAW FROM UN MISSION

On February 8, 2026, the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) confirmed South Africa's announcement to withdraw its military contingent by year's end. Pretoria cited the need to "consolidate and readjust" its forces after 27 years of engagement. MONUSCO praised South Africa's long-standing commitment and the dedication of its peacekeepers. The decision follows the deaths of 14 South African soldiers in the 2025 battle for Goma, where the M23 rebel group seized control. About 700 South African troops currently serve in the 12,500 strong MONUSCO force.

UN TO DEPLOY CEASEFIRE MONITORING MISSION IN EASTERN DRC

On February 3, 2026, the UN announced plans to deploy a mission in eastern DRC to monitor a ceasefire between the Congolese government and the M23 rebel group. The decision followed a meeting in Doha, mediated by Qatar, where both sides agreed on a surveillance mechanism for a "permanent" ceasefire. The UN's Monusco mission is expected to start operations in Uvira, a strategic city near the Burundi border recently retaken by Congolese forces after a M23 occupation in December 2025. Despite multiple peace agreements, fighting continues, including recent clashes near Minembwe in South Kivu.

DRONES RESHAPE WAR

Drones emerged as a critical factor in eastern DRC's conflict, with both Congolese and M23 forces increasingly reliant on unmanned aerial systems. Kisangani airport, a key military hub, was targeted in a February drone attack claimed by M23, which sought to destroy a "drone command center." **The Congolese army, supported by foreign paramilitaries, uses Chinese CH4 and Turkish Anka drones to counter M23's ground advances. Rwanda has deployed GPS jamming systems near its border, disrupting civilian and humanitarian flights. The M23 also used kamikaze drones during its December Uvira offensive.**

ADF REBELS MASSACRE 25 FARMERS IN NORTHEASTERN DRC

On January 25–26, 2026, at least 25 farmers, 17 men and 5 women, were killed by ADF rebels near Otmaber and Bwanasula villages in Irumu territory, Ituri province. The victims, working in remote cocoa fields, were reportedly bound and hacked to death with

machetes. Several others were taken hostage. Local civil society leader Léon Undemutau Manzaleke and human rights defender Christophe Munyanderu confirmed the toll, while a humanitarian source described bodies left in the bush. The ADF, allied with the Islamic State, persist in attacks despite joint Congolese-Ugandan military operations. Irumu territory administrator Siro Simba blamed the civilians for defying safety orders, prohibiting farming in the area.

MINING ACTIVITIES THREATEN LOCAL AREA

On January 23, 2026, Valery Kyembo and local leaders in Lukutwe, Haut-Katanga, reported that soldiers blocked access to their protected forest reserve, as mining companies increasingly encroach on community lands. The DRC's cobalt-rich belt, producing 70% of the world's supply, is under intense pressure from firms like Tiger Resources (Australian, via its subsidiary SEK), MMG Limited (Australian, via MMG Kinsevere SARL), and China Minmetals (Chinese, majority shareholder in MMG), as well as Huayou Cobalt (Chinese, via Congo Dongfang Mining). Despite official land titles for 20 community forest reserves, locals fear displacement and environmental destruction. A November 2025 spill from Congo Dongfang Mining polluted Lubumbashi's suburbs, prompting a government suspension.

THE ARMY RETAKES UVIRA AFTER M23 WITHDRAWAL

On January 19, 2026, the Congolese army (FARDC) announced it had retaken control of Uvira, a strategic city in eastern DR Congo, following the withdrawal of M23 rebels backed by Rwanda, which had seized the city in December 2025. Local militias and special forces entered Uvira on January 18, greeted by celebrating residents, though looting and sporadic gunfire were reported. The M23, which had claimed to place Uvira under “international responsibility,” repositioned its troops on the city's outskirts and nearby hills. South Kivu Governor Jean-Jacques Purusi accused the M23 of staging a “victimization tactic” and manipulating the Banyamulenge community, many of whom fled with the rebels. The army arrested 20 looters and continued deploying to secure the city, including the Banyamulenge neighborhood.

DRC ARMY DRONE STRIKE KILLS 6, WOUNDS 41 IN MASISI

On January 2, 2026, a DRC army drone strike hit civilian homes in Masisi-centre, killing 6 and wounding 41, according to local administrator Emmanuel Ndizeye. The town, 80 km from Goma, has been under M23 control since January 2025. M23 spokesperson Lawrence Kanyuka condemned the strike as indiscriminate. The attack follows ongoing clashes between pro-Kinshasa forces and M23 in Kivu.

ADF REBELS KILL 14 IN NORTH KIVU

On January 1, 2026, ADF rebels attacked Katanga, Maendeleo, and Kilonge villages in Lubero territory, North Kivu, killing 12 civilians, 2 soldiers and burning 13 houses. Local

chief Macaire Sivikunula reported panic as gunfire was heard from 8 to 10 PM. Army spokesperson Lieutenant Marc Elongo confirmed the toll and stated that Congolese and Ugandan forces are pursuing the attackers, who disrupted New Year's celebrations.

MASS EXODUS AS FIGHTING RAGES NEAR UVIRA

On December 29, 2025, hundreds of families fled to Uvira, escaping clashes between the Congolese army and M23 rebels in Kigongo, Katongo, and Kabimba, less than 10 km from Uvira. Local residents reported the influx, with displaced people hosted by families, worsening economic and food insecurity. The Congolese army claimed to have retaken Luhanga and Kigongo after violent fighting, but this was not independently confirmed. The Congolese government accused the Rwandan army and the M23 rebel group of killing over 1,500 civilians and displacing more than 500,000 people in the Uvira area, South Kivu, since the start of December. The M23, backed by Rwanda, seized Uvira on December 10, despite announcing a withdrawal on December 17. The DRC government denounced the presence of three new Rwandan battalions and their advance towards Fizi and Kalemie. Local sources confirmed M23 elements remained in Uvira, collaborating with some residents.

CONTROVERSY OVER ARMY SPOKESMAN'S ANTI-TUTSI REMARKS

On December 28, 2025, DRC army spokesman General Sylvain Ekenge sparked outrage by warning against "infiltration strategies" by Rwanda, specifically targeting Tutsi women in marriages. He suggested such unions could introduce Rwandan influence and "superiority" ideologies. Critics, including John Nsana Kanyoni and the Lucha movement, condemned the remarks as hate speech and called for sanctions. Former magistrate Frédéric Bola compared the rhetoric to the ideology behind the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Ekenge was suspended following the backlash.

JOURNALIST TORTURED IN BUKAVU

On December 27, 2025, Honneur-David Safari, editor-in-chief of La Prunelle RDC, was abducted in Bukavu by unidentified men and found three days later near Nyantende, showing signs of torture. His lawyer, Pascal Mupenda confirmed the incident. Reporter sans frontières demanded the M23-led coalition (AFC/M23) to investigate the attack and to ensure press safety. The M23 denied holding Safari. The abduction occurred as the M23 controls Bukavu and Goma, and follows a pattern of press intimidation in eastern DRC.

NEW CLASHES REPORTED NEAR UVIRA

On December 26, 2025, new fighting erupted around Uvira as Congolese forces bombed two M23 speedboats at Kalundu port, setting them ablaze, according to local civil society leader Martin Mafikiri Mashimango. Residents reported seeing an aircraft strike the port, while a security source confirmed drone attacks on the vessels. Overnight clashes also occurred on Kavimvira hill between Wazalendo militias and M23 fighters.

CLASHES NEAR UVIRA

On December 22, 2025, heavy fighting broke out between M23 rebels and pro-Kinshasa Wazalendo militias on the outskirts of Uvira, despite the M23's claimed withdrawal. Civilians reported exchanges of fire in southern neighborhoods and near Kalundu port on Lake Tanganyika. Both the Congolese army and M23 accused each other of shelling the city. The M23's seizure of Uvira, a strategic border city with Burundi, had triggered a humanitarian crisis, displacing over 200,000 people and forcing 80,000 to flee to Burundi, where at least 8 have died of cholera.

UVIRA: M23 POLICE AND INTELLIGENCE STILL PRESENT

On December 18, 2025, despite the M23's announced withdrawal from Uvira, South Kivu, local and security sources reported that rebel police and intelligence agents remained deployed at strategic points across the city. A civil society representative confirmed M23 elements were still at the town hall, police stations, and banks. The Congolese military accused the M23 of staging a "media stunt" and repositioning forces on hills overlooking Uvira. The Congolese government spokesperson, Patrick Muyaya, stated the withdrawal would only be valid if verified by Congolese forces retaking full control.

SURGE IN SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

The UNICEF report highlights the North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri provinces as epicenters, where armed groups operate with impunity. Between January and September 2025, over 35,000 cases of sexual violence against children were recorded in DRC, with nearly 45,000 in 2024, three times the 2022 figure. Girls represent 47% of survivors, up from 27% in 2022. Adolescents, boys, and disabled children are also targeted. Victims often drop out of school due to stigma or pregnancy. Funding for gender-based violence programs dropped to 23% in 2025, threatening support services.

FORCED RECRUITMENT AND ABUSE BY ADF REBELS

Minors shared accounts of their forced recruitment by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in eastern DRC. They described months of brutal training, forced conversions to Islam, and participation in pillaging and combat. Some of them became addicted to drugs administered by rebels after a combat injury. They suffered severe beatings.

GOMA'S FALL ANNIVERSARY

One year ago, the M23 rebel group supported by Rwanda seized Goma, the capital of DR Congo's North Kivu province, after intense fighting that left thousands dead. The city now falls silent after 6 p.m. as M23 patrols enforce curfews, conduct arrests and execute suspected criminals. Prisons overflow, and the stadium serves as an open-air detention center. NGOs

report torture and summary executions. The M23 has imposed its own judges, taxes, and ideological training, while banks remain closed and the airport inaccessible. Civilians, stripped of livelihoods, survive on dwindling savings and Rwandan francs.

M23 PLEDGES UVIRA WITHDRAWAL

On December 16, 2025, M23 announced a “unilateral” withdrawal from Uvira, following US pressure. New day, local sources reported columns of M23 vehicles leaving the city but that some fighters remained in the city. In Burundi, 85,000 Congolese refugees faced catastrophic conditions, with officials reporting starvation and a lack of basic supplies. The US accused Rwanda of deploying 5,000 to 7,000 troops in eastern DRC, violating the Washington peace deal. M23’s advance threatens mineral-rich Haut-Katanga, as clashes continued near Baraka and Fizi.

M23 CONTROLS BORDER

On December 15, 2025, Burundian soldiers and M23 rebels faced each other at the Kavimvira border post, as over 500 Burundian civilians returned home under M23 escort. The UN warned of a “conflagration” in the Great Lakes region. Roads between Kamanyola and Uvira were littered with burned military vehicles, abandoned weapons, and deserted villages. Civilians described harrowing escapes, with families separated and homes destroyed.

M23 ADVANCES DESPITE US CONDEMNATION

On December 13, 2025, the M23 continued its advance in eastern DRC, capturing Kipupu without resistance after Burundian troops withdrew. Clashes erupted between pro-Kinshasa militias and the M23-allied Twirwaneho militia near Fizi and Baraka. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio condemned Rwanda’s “clear violation” of the Washington peace accord, vowing consequences. The UN warned of a potential regional conflagration.

M23 SEIZES UVIRA

On December 12, 2025, the Rwanda-backed M23 rebel group captured Uvira, a strategic city in eastern DR Congo. The group, which already controlled Goma and Bukavu, now holds the DRC-Burundi border, cutting off Kinshasa’s military support. Residents reported sporadic gunfire as M23 conducted house-to-house searches for pro-government militias. Civilians described forced community labor and a curfew. The Red Cross reported 100 gunshot victims admitted to Uvira’s hospital between December 2-11.

EXODUS TO RWANDA

On December 12, 2025, thousands of Congolese civilians fled after heavy shelling destroyed homes and killed dozens. Refugees in Rwanda’s Nyarushishi refugee camp

described indiscriminate bombing by DRC and M23 forces. The UN warned of a worsening humanitarian crisis, with over 200,000 displaced since the M23's December offensive with abandoned villages and looted homes lining the Ruzizi Plain. The US-brokered "peace accord" between DRC's Tshisekedi and Rwanda's Kagame, signed December 4, failed to halt the violence.

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS DEEPENS AS UVIRA FALLS

On December 12, 2025, the UN reported over 500,000 people displaced by the M23 offensive in South Kivu, with Uvira's fall exacerbating the crisis. Civilians described chaos, looting, and summary executions as Congolese and Burundian forces retreated. The Red Cross evacuated 21 wounded, including seven children, from combat zones. The M23, now controlling Uvira, patrolled the city and urged residents to return, but fear and uncertainty persisted. The UN Secretary-General warned of a "regional conflagration".

M23 CAPTURES STRATEGIC UVIRA DESPITE PEACE DEAL

On December 10, 2025, the M23 rebel group, allegedly backed by Rwandan forces, seized control of Uvira, a strategic city in South Kivu, despite the December 4 Washington peace deal. The offensive began on December 1, with M23 advancing rapidly along the Ruzizi River and National Road 5, capturing Sange, Luvungi, and Kamanyola. Burundian troops, supporting the Congolese army, retreated to defend their border. Over 30,000 Congolese civilians fled to Burundi, and more than 200,000 were displaced within South Kivu. M23 spokesperson Lawrence Kanyuka declared Uvira "fully liberated" and urged residents to return. The UN warned of a worsening humanitarian crisis and regional escalation, with at least 413 civilians killed since December.

RWANDA & DRC ACCUSED EACH OTHER

On December 8, 2025, President Tshisekedi accused Rwanda of violating the Washington accord, citing Rwandan army support for M23 attacks in South Kivu. Rwanda countered by accusing DRC and Burundi of bombing Rwandan border villages. Burundi, with 18,000 troops in DRC, closed its border with DRC on December 10, declaring it a "military zone." The US and EU called for an immediate cessation of hostilities. UN experts reported 6,000–7,000 Rwandan troops in DRC, directly involved in M23 operations, and documented summary executions, forced recruitment, and mass displacement. The M23's capture of Uvira further strained regional relations.

TRUMP HOSTS DRC-RWANDA PEACE CEREMONY AS BATTLES RAGE

On December 4, 2025, US President Donald Trump presided over a peace deal signing ceremony in Washington, even as heavy fighting continued in eastern Congo. The agreement, brokered by the US and Qatar, includes provisions for a ceasefire, disarmament, and economic integration, as well as US partnerships for strategic mineral exploitation.

However, **clashes persisted in South Kivu, with reports of airstrikes, artillery fire, and civilian casualties.** The region, plagued by conflict for decades, faces a severe humanitarian crisis. Trump's role in the deal is seen as part of his broader push for securing critical mineral supplies.

HEAVY FIGHTING IN EASTERN DRC ON EVE OF PEACE DEAL

On December 3, 2025, intense clashes erupted in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo between the Rwandan-backed M23 armed group and the Congolese army, supported by local armed groups. The fighting occurred just hours before DRC President Tshisekedi and Rwandan President Kagame were due in Washington to formalize a US-brokered peace agreement. Locals reported heavy shelling and airstrikes in Kaziba and Katogota, with civilians trapped in their homes and numerous casualties. **The M23, which has been advancing in South Kivu for weeks, is attempting to encircle Uvira, the last major city in the province not under its control. Burundian troops are also deployed alongside Congolese forces.**

UN REPORTS 89 CIVILIANS KILLED BY ADF IN ONE WEEK IN EASTERN DRC

On November 21, 2025, the UN mission in DRC (Monusco) announced that ADF rebels killed 89 civilians, including women and children, in a series of attacks from November 13–19 in Lubero territory, North Kivu. The deadliest incident occurred at a Catholic health center in Byambwe where 17 civilians, including women in maternity care, were killed. Other villages (Mabiango, Tunarudi, Sambalysa, Thucha, Butsili) suffered abductions, looting and arson. The ADF, active in North Kivu and Ituri, have killed over 260 people since July.

DRC AND M23 SIGN PEACE ROADMAP, NO IMMEDIATE CHANGE EXPECTED

On November 15, 2025, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) government and the Rwanda-backed M23 rebel group signed the Doha Framework for a Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Qatar. Mediated by the U.S., Qatar, and the African Union, the non-binding accord outlines eight protocols addressing root causes of conflict, prisoner releases, ceasefire monitoring, and humanitarian access. M23 representative Benjamin Mbonimpa stated the deal would not alter the ground situation, while Kinshasa pledged “real and measurable change” for local populations. U.S. advisor Massad Boulos called it a “starting point.” The M23 controls Goma and Bukavu seized earlier in 2025, and denies ties to Rwanda. **Clashes continue despite a July ceasefire.**

REBELS KILL AT LEAST 18 IN HEALTH CENTER

On November 15, 2025, ADF rebels, affiliated with the Islamic State, attacked the health center in Biambwe village, 40 km west of Butembo, North Kivu. Local police secretary Marcel Mumbere Kanzoka reported 16 deaths at the center and 2 in nearby areas, with houses burned and people missing. The Red Cross later reported 23 fatalities.

TRIAL OPENS IN PARIS FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY IN DRC

On November 12, 2025, the trial of former Congolese rebel leader Roger Lumbala began in Paris, facing charges of complicity in crimes against humanity committed in 2002–2003 in northeastern DRC. Lumbala, 67, led the RCD-N rebel group, which, alongside Jean-Pierre Bemba's MLC, launched operation "Effacer le tableau" (erase the board) to seize natural resources and eliminate pro-government factions. **The operation resulted in mass rapes, executions, torture, and forced labor, targeting Nande and Bambuti Pygmy women.** Lumbala, who denies command responsibility, was arrested in France in 2020 after his refugee status was revoked. This is the first trial in France for atrocities in DR Congo under universal jurisdiction. After one day of trial, he expressed his refusal to attend, denying France's competence.

ONLINE FRAUD SPREADS IN M23 HELD AREAS

On November 6, 2025, reports from Bukavu and Goma described a **surge in online scams amid severe cash shortages in M23-controlled zones** of eastern DRC. With **banks shuttered by Kinshasa** to prevent financing of the armed group, residents increasingly turn to fraudulent cryptocurrency "investment" platforms. Promising quick profits, these schemes resemble pyramid or Ponzi systems where returns depend on recruiting new members. In Bukavu, locals boast of earnings from such platforms, though many later lose their savings. Cybersecurity trainer Justin Murhula warned that widespread poverty and conflict have made the region "fertile ground" for digital scams. Despite peace agreements signed earlier this year, **M23 kept local banks closed, imposed new taxes, and urged mobile payments to fund their parallel administration.** Legal expert Pascal Mupenda said that **victims are losing hundreds of dollars** to nonexistent companies.

M23 RECRUITS JUDGES

On November 3, 2025, the M23 rebel group announced the recruitment of 378 judges to serve in territories under its control in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The announcement, made by M23 spokesperson Lawrence Kanyuka, follows what the group called a "judicial revival commission" that screened 475 candidates. Délion Kimbulungu, head of the commission, confirmed that the selected candidates will soon be integrated into the group's "judicial system." **The M23 has imposed a parallel administration** in areas it controls. The move comes despite peace efforts, including a ceasefire declaration signed in July in Doha and a DRC–Rwanda peace accord in June in Washington. President Félix Tshisekedi said on Sunday that new talks are expected this week in Doha ahead of a meeting with Rwandan President Paul Kagame in Washington, under U.S. mediation.

U.N. NAMES INVESTIGATORS FOR KIVU PROVINCES

On October 27, 2025, the UN Human Rights Council announced the appointment of three experts to investigate abuses in DRC's North and South Kivu provinces: Arnauld Akodjenou (Benin) as head, assisted by Maxine Marcus (Germany/USA) and Clément Nyaletsossi Voule

(Togo). The move follows months of delay due to budget cuts, primarily from the US and other states.

The region, rich in minerals, has suffered armed conflict for over 30 years, with violence surging since 2021 as the Rwanda-backed M23 rebel group seized Goma (January) and Bukavu (February). Thousands have died and hundreds of thousands displaced this year alone. The Council's February resolution **tasked the commission with documenting violations and identifying perpetrators for accountability**. The team is to visit DRC by January 2026.

HUMANITARIAN URGENCY IN EASTERN DRC

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, more than 21 million people currently require humanitarian assistance, according to Oxfam France. The eastern region, bordering Rwanda, has experienced intensified conflict since January 2025, when the M23 armed group, supported by Kigali, captured the cities of Goma and Bukavu. These conflicts have displaced over 1.6 million people since the start of the year, bringing the total number of internally displaced persons to 5.2 million. Food insecurity affects 28 million people, health services are overwhelmed, and infrastructure has been destroyed. Sexual violence is reported at a rate of one woman raped every four minutes. Humanitarian aid has decreased, with funding cut by two-thirds over the past year. Louis-Nicolas Jandeaux, Oxfam France official, called for stronger international support at the October 30 conference on the Great Lakes region organized by France, aimed at mobilizing global action and supporting mediation efforts led by the United States and Qatar. Oxfam notes that last year 70% of aid came from the United States, while France contributed only 0.5% of the required funds, amounting to \$8 million versus an estimated \$127.5 million proportional to its global economic weight.

On **October 14, 2025**, the DRC government and the M23 rebel group agreed in Doha to establish a ceasefire monitoring mechanism, facilitated by Qatar, to supervise compliance and investigate violations. The committee will include equal representation from both sides, with the US, AU, and UN mission (Monusco) as observers, and is seen as a crucial step toward a broader peace agreement. Both sides have accused each other of breaching previous agreements, and the M23, backed by Rwanda, controls parts of eastern DRC, including the major cities of Goma and Bukavu.