



January 31, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio, Secretary of State U.S. Department of State,
Honorable Members of the U.S. House Subcommittee on Africa,
Honorable Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations' Subcommittee on
Africa and Global Health Policy

Re: Urgent Call for U.S. Action Against Rwanda's Violation of DRC's Territorial Integrity

Dear Secretary Rubio and Honorable Members of Congress,

We are writing to bring to your attention the grave humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where the Rwandan government has been violating the country's territorial integrity. The Rwandan military has been using the March 23 (M23) rebel group, a Congolese Tutsi-led movement, to occupy key areas, including the recent occupation of North Kivu capital, Goma on January 23, 2025. This is the latest in a series of violent aggressions since M23 resumed its armed conflict against the DRC in early 2022. The Congolese people have suffered tremendously since 1996, enduring mass killings, displacement, economic impoverishment, cultural genocide, and ethnic-based violence it is imperative that the United States (U.S.) takes decisive action to support the sovereignty of the DRC and help put an end to these atrocities.

We urge the U.S. to stand firmly with the Congolese government in rejecting Rwanda's attempts to force dialogue through violence and armed rebellion. This cycle of allowing disgruntled Congolese factions to seek refuge in Rwanda and receive military support to destabilize the DRC must be stopped once and for all.

The war against the DRC is not only waged by Rwanda and its proxies but also fueled by international actors who profit from the illegal exploitation of Congolese minerals. Uganda has allowed Rwanda to use its territory to launch its military campaign against the DRC, consistent with Uganda's history of supporting Rwandan military incursions since 1996.

The ongoing human toll of this invasion compounds the egregious crimes perpetrated against the DRC since Rwanda and Uganda's 1996 aggression, as extensively documented in the 2010 UN Mapping Report. We advocate against impunity and call for accountability for

those responsible for perpetuating instability in the DRC. As Ambassador Dorothy Shea, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations (UN), stated during the UN Security Council briefing on January 28, 2025, the U.S. "stands in firm support of the Congolese people and of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the DRC and urges Rwanda to respect the same."

Given this commitment, we respectfully request the following immediate actions from the U.S. government:

1. **Provide urgent humanitarian assistance:** Offer food, medicine, and other essential aid to displaced populations
2. **Remove Rwandan forces from UN Peacekeeping Roles:** Respond to Rwanda's killing of UN peacekeepers and destruction of their equipment by removing them from peacekeeping roles worldwide.
3. **Demand the full withdrawal of Rwandan military forces from the DRC:** Insist on the withdrawal of Rwandan military forces from the DRC, in compliance with international law.
4. **Impose an Embargo on Rwanda's Mineral Sales:** Cut off financial support fueling the conflict by imposing an embargo on Rwanda's sale of minerals originating from the DRC.
5. **Suspend U.S. Aid to Rwanda:** Suspend aid until Rwanda ceases its aggression against the DRC, as Germany has done.
6. **Support the East African Community (EAC) Decision:** Implement the EAC decision of April 2022, which mandates that EAC member states with rebel groups operating in the DRC negotiate peace agreements or be disarmed by force.

The people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have endured decades of suffering. We urge you to take these necessary steps to ensure stability and justice for the Congolese people.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,



Steven N Rogers, Phd,
Executive Director

Cc:

US Embassy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Africa Faith and Justice Network Organizational Members:

Adorers of the Blood of Christ
Archdiocese of Cincinnati Mission Office
Comboni Missionaries
Congregation of Holy Cross Sisters
Congregation of the Holy Spirit
Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace
Dominican Sisters of Peace
Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa
Good Shepherd Parish, Wayland MA
Holy Cross Fathers
Knights of St. John
Marianist Province of the United States
Maryknoll Society
Medical Mission Sisters
Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate
Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa
Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit

Missionhurst
Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ
Priests of the Sacred Heart
Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary
School Sisters of Notre Dame: Central Pacific Province
Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati
Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth
Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus
Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur
Sisters of Saint Francis, Dubuque, Iowa
Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Society of Missionaries of Africa
Society of the Divine Word
Xaverian Brothers
Xaverian Missionaries