

July 16, 2012

Members

United Nations Security Council

New York, NY, USA

Dear Sir/Madam,

Atrocities are once again being committed in our country, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Congolese people are again the victim of attacks by an armed group backed by Rwanda: the M23. In addition to the Congolese people's considerable efforts to recover from their past trauma, the M23 is now threatening the DRC's progress toward peace, in particular in the east, and may negate the semblance of peace which the people of eastern DRC were beginning to enjoy. The M23 has recently taken control of more towns in Rutshuru territory, overwhelming the Congolese army and United Nations peacekeeping forces. These advances, and a possible attack on Goma, represent a further threat to civilians.

We, Congolese civil society organizations, decry and stand against this situation. We ask you and your Government to take immediate steps to cease all support from Rwanda to the mutiny in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo led by Bosco Ntaganda.

As you know, Ntaganda is wanted for war crimes by the International Criminal Court. He has been joined in his mutiny by other commanders with track records of serious human rights abuses. We know these men. The people of eastern Congo have long been the victims of their crimes, which have often gone unpunished. We urgently desire peace and stability in Congo, but we do not believe it can come when such individuals continue to incite conflict and commit further abuses against civilians.

Research by many of our organizations in addition to that by the United Nations Group of Experts, the UN peacekeeping mission (MONUSCO), the international organization Human Rights Watch, and others show irrefutable evidence of Rwanda's support to M23. The support includes weapons, ammunition, and recruits coming in from Rwanda, in violation of United Nations resolutions. Rwandan officials are implicated, including the minister of defense. We have also received credible reports that Rwandan army soldiers have participated in operations against the Congolese army, alongside M23 fighters, including during the recent offensive in Bunagana, when a United Nations peacekeeper was killed. It is false to talk of a mafia network supporting M23 from Rwanda, if indeed Rwandan officials and Rwandan army soldiers themselves are involved. Many of our organizations have documented the support to M23 from Rwanda, and we have no doubt that it is happening.

Rwandan support to the M23 rebellion is contributing to the destabilization of the DRC, despite all the efforts undertaken by Congolese and the international community to ensure peace in North and South Kivu provinces, and to develop the economy in a sustainable manner. It hampers efforts to fight the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and other rebel groups because the attention of the Congolese army, the FARDC, is focused on this new crisis. Rwanda's support to M23 saps efforts to bring together the two countries, including recent efforts to restart the CEPGL. It brings about a serious humanitarian crisis, reawakens ethno-tribal tensions, and seriously threatens the natural environment (fighting is taking place in the Virunga National Park). The longer this goes on,

the more difficult it will be to find solutions. And the humanitarian consequences will multiply. 200,000 people have been recently displaced in North Kivu, or as refugees across international borders. We fear a further deterioration of the situation.

We urge you and your government to publicly call on the government of Rwanda to investigate and put a stop to all its support to the M23 mutiny. To prove the seriousness of calls from your government and from the UN Security Council, we hope you will be ready to withdraw aid or sanction Rwanda if support to M23 in eastern Congo does not immediately cease.

We also urge you to look closer at who the M23 mutineers really are. The leaders of this movement are military commanders with track records of serious human rights abuses and attacks on civilians in eastern Congo that have been documented by many of our organizations as well as the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. General Bosco Ntaganda is sought on an arrest warrant by the International Criminal Court for war crimes committed in Ituri. Since he moved to North Kivu, he has continued to be implicated in horrific abuses. Other top leaders Colonel Sultani Makenga, Colonel Innocent Zimurinda, Colonel Baudouin Ngaruye, and Colonel Innocent Kayna (alias "India Queen") have also been implicated in the forced recruitment of children, ethnic massacres, and widespread sexual violence.

These alleged war criminals are demanding the implementation of the March 23, 2009 agreements, and claim to defend the interests of the Congolese Tutsi community. Yet many members of the Congolese Tutsi community have fled Masisi and Rutshuru territories to escape forced recruitment by the mutineers. Leaders of the Congolese Tutsi and Hutu communities, including military officers, politicians, and businessmen, have been under intense pressure from Rwandan officials to join or support the movement. Some have received death threats, and many feel they have no choice but to join. We deplore this pressure and we urge that it be stopped immediately. We no longer want to bear witness to the scourge of escalating ethnic tensions, and we will do whatever we can to end them.

We are also deeply concerned by the large-scale massacres and other atrocities committed in the past few months by the FDLR (a largely Rwandan Hutu rebel group), the Raia Mutomboki, and other militia groups operating in areas the Congolese army has largely abandoned while focusing its efforts on defeating the M23 rebellion.

Over the past two decades, the people of eastern Congo have suffered countless atrocities during occupations and rebellions backed by Rwanda. Hundreds of thousands of Congolese civilians were killed during these rebellions, and countless others displaced from their homes, wounded, raped, or tortured. The AFDL, RCD, and CNDP rebellions were all backed by Rwandan officials, including Rwandan army soldiers who were often deployed to eastern Congo and participated in the atrocities. Indeed, Rwanda has never on its own admitted its implication in these rebellions. It is therefore not surprising that Rwanda is again striving to deny the evidence. Rwanda is trying to gain time, and force, and understands that many key international players still hesitate to hold those responsible to account.

Time and again, the international community has been reluctant to recognize Rwanda's role in Congo's crises, and very few governments have taken action to press Rwanda to stop such support to rebel groups in eastern Congo. Yet it is we who suffer from these ill-judged policies. It is we, the

people of eastern Congo, who are killed when the bullets fly, who have to run for our lives, whose wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters are raped, and whose children are forcibly recruited, die of malnourishment before the age of five, or have no future in areas where schools barely function.

In 2010, the United Nations “mapping report” demonstrated the degree of the worst violations of international humanitarian and human rights law committed in Congo between 1993 and 2003. The report raised the possibility that some of the crimes committed by Rwandan army soldiers in Congo could be classified as “crimes of genocide.” The Rwandan government tried to block publication of the report, and received support from some Security Council members, including the United States. It was only after the report was leaked to the press that Security Council members agreed to publish the report officially.

From 2006 to 2008, the Rwandan government and army backed the CNDP rebellion, led by Laurent Nkunda – a group responsible for large-scale massacres, forced recruitment of children, and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians. The international community turned a blind eye to Rwanda’s role in the conflict until late 2008, when a United Nations Group of Experts report exposed in detail the military support and recruits provided by Rwanda to the rebellion.

We should not permit the same mistakes to be made again. Hiding or ignoring the truth about Rwanda’s support to rebellions in eastern Congo has never brought us closer to peace, stability, or a long-awaited end to the cycles of violence and impunity. The longer the international community waits before putting serious pressure on the Rwandan government, the more time the M23 and their supporters will have to recruit our children by force and expand their area of control with the inevitable result that thousands of people will be forced to flee.

We are tired of being used by Rwandan officials for their Machiavellian objectives. For us in eastern Congo, we want to see no more killings, no more rapes, no more forced recruitment, and no more displacement.

We ask you to do everything to stop these warlike ambitions on Rwanda’s part, to stem its support for rebel forces currently present in eastern Congo, to further commit and support MONUSCO in the defense of civilian populations, and to support the DRC government efforts in the fight against M23 and the thinly veiled Rwandan aggression.

Yours sincerely,

Signatory Organizations:

1. Action Contre l’Impunité pour les Droits de l’Homme (ACIDH), Kasai Oriental
2. Action de Chrétiens pour les Droits de l’Homme (ACREDH), Kasai Oriental
3. Action des Chrétiens pour l’Abolition de la Torture au Nord-Kivu (ACAT/NK)
4. Action des Chrétiens pour la Promotion de la Paix et du Développement (ACPD) , Nord-Kivu
5. Action Globale pour la Promotion Sociale et la Paix (AGPSP), Nord-Kivu
6. Action Humanitaire et de Développement intégral (AHDI), Nord-Kivu
7. Action Intégrée pour le Développement de Ngandajika (AIDN), Kasai Oriental
8. Action pour la Promotion de la Participation Citoyenne (APPC), Nord-Kivu

9. Action pour la Protection des Droits Humains et du Développement (APDHUD), Sud-Kivu
10. Action pour la Protection et la Défense des Droits des Enfants et des Femmes (APDDEF), Kasai Oriental
11. Action pour le Changement de Comportement (ACC), Orientale
12. Action pour le Développement Durable et Intégré de la ville de Mwene-Ditu (ADDIM), Kasai Oriental
13. Action pour le Développement Intégral en Milieu Rural de la ville de Mwene-Ditu (ADIMIR), Kasai Oriental
14. Action Rurale Contre la Faim, Tshilenge (ARCF), Kasai Oriental
15. Action Sociale pour la Paix et le Développement (ASPD), Nord-Kivu
16. Actions Conjointes de Lutte Contre l'Impunité en République Démocratique du Congo, Kinshasa
17. Africa Justice Peace and Development (AJPD), Nord-Kivu
18. Aide-Kivu, Sud-Kivu
19. Amis de Nelson Mandela pour les Droits de l'Homme (ANMDH), national
20. Appui aux Femmes démunies et Enfants Marginalisés (AFEDM), Nord-Kivu
21. Arche d'Alliance Nord-Kivu (ARAL/NK)
22. Association Africaine de Défense des Droits de l'Homme (ASADHO), national
23. Association de Défense des Droits des Femmes (ADDF), Nord-Kivu
24. Association des Chauffeurs du Congo Sud-Kivu (ACCO), Sud-Kivu
25. Association des Enfants et Jeunes Travailleurs (AEJT), Sud-Kivu
26. Association des Femmes pour le Progrès Social et Culturel (AFPSC), Nord-Kivu
27. Association des Jeunes Avocats pour le Leadership Intégral (AJALSI), Nord-Kivu
28. Association des Parents pour le Développement de l'Education et la Technologie (APADET), Sud-Kivu
29. Association des Scouts du Sud-Kivu (ASSK)
30. Association Mères de Tous (AMT), Kasai Oriental
31. Association pour la Promotion des Propriétaires et Transporteurs des Motos du Sud-Kivu (APROMOTOSKI)
32. Association pour le Développement de Kitamba-Mwenga (ADKI), Sud-Kivu
33. Association pour le Développement des Initiatives Paysannes (ASSODIP), Nord-Kivu
34. Avocats des Droits de l'Homme (ADH), Kasai Oriental
35. Blessed Aid, Nord-Kivu
36. Bons Samaritains des Grands Lacs (BOSAM GL/DDH), Nord-Kivu
37. Campagne pour la Paix (CCP), Nord-Kivu
38. Carrefour des Jeunes pour le Développement et la Promotion des Droits (CJDH), Sud-Kivu
39. Caucus des Femmes Congolaises du Sud-Kivu pour la Paix
40. Centre d'Encadrement pour le Développement Intégral (CEDI), Kasai Oriental
41. Centre d'Etude et de Formation Populaire pour les Droits de l'Homme (CEFOP/DH), Kasai Oriental
42. Centre d'Etude Juridique Appliqués (CEJA), Nord-Kivu
43. Centre d'Initiatives pour le Développement Intégral (CIDI/RDC), Kinshasa
44. Centre d'Initiatives pour le Développement Intégral (CIDI/NK), Nord-Kivu
45. Centre de Développement Familial (CEDEF), Kinshasa
46. Centre de Droits de l'Homme et du Droit Humanitaire (CDH), Katanga

47. Centre des Recherches sur l'Environnement, la Démocratie et les Droits de l'Homme (CREDDHO), Nord-Kivu
48. Centre International de Formation en Droits Humains (CFIDH), Nord-Kivu
49. Centre OLAME, Sud-Kivu
50. Civis Congo, Nord-Kivu
51. Coalition Congolaise pour la Cour Pénale Internationale (CN-RDC/CPI), national
52. Coalition Congolaise pour la Justice Transitionnelle (CCJT), national
53. Collectif des Jeunes Solidaires du Congo-Kinshasa (COJESKI), national
54. Collectif des ONG des Droits de l'Homme pour les Elections (CODHELEC), Kasai Oriental
55. Collectif des Organisations des Jeunes Solidaires du Congo-Kinshasa/Nord-Kivu (COJESKI/NK)
56. Collectif des Organisations des Jeunes Solidaires du Congo-Kinshasa/Sud-Kivu (COJESKI/SK)
57. Collectif pour le Développement Economique Social et Culturel Intégré (CODESCI), Kasai Oriental
58. Comité des Droits de l'Homme et Développement (CODHOD), Kinshasa
59. Comité Local de Promotion de l'Enfant (CLPE), Kasai Oriental
60. Commission Diocésaine Justice et Paix – Dungen (CJDP-Dungen), Orientale
61. Communicateurs pour la Promotion, la Protection et la Défense des Droits de l'Homme (COPPRODDHO), Kasai Oriental
62. Congo Peace Network (CPN), Nord-Kivu
63. Conscience Maman Ya Sika (CYS), Orientale
64. Conseil des Facilitateurs des Pays des Grands Lacs (CFGL), Sud-Kivu
65. Conseil National des Techniciens en Développement Rural du Congo (CONATERDECO), Kinshasa
66. Conseil Régional des Organisations Non Gouvernementales de Développement (CRONGD), Equateur
67. Construisons la Paix et le Développement Intégral (COPADI), Nord-Kivu
68. Coordination de la Société Civile de Kinshasa (SOCIKIN)
69. Coordination de la Société Civile du Nord-Kivu (SOCIV/NK)
70. Coordination de la Société Civile du Sud-Kivu (SOCIV/SK)
71. Coordination des Organisations de Refoulés et Vulnérables du Site Cibombo (CORSC), Kasai Oriental
72. Dauphins Munzirwa-Kataliko (DMK), Sud-Kivu
73. Défense et Assistance aux Femmes et Enfants Vulnérables (DAFEVA), Nord-Kivu
74. Dynamique de la Société Civile de la République Démocratique du Congo pour la Paix, la Sécurité et la Démocratie dans la Région des Grands Lacs (DYSOCIV), Kinshasa
75. Dynamique des Organisations de la Société Civile pour les Élections et la Décentralisation (DOSCED), Nord-Kivu
76. Encadrement des Femmes Indigènes et des Ménages Vulnérables (EFIM), Nord-Kivu
77. Femmes Engagés pour la Promotion des Droits de la Femme et de la Sante Intégrale (FEPSI), Nord-Kivu
78. Femmes Juristes pour les Droits de la Femme (FJDF), Nord-Kivu
79. Femmes Solidaires pour la Paix et le Développement (FSPD), Kinshasa
80. Fondation AGAPE, Sud-Kivu
81. Fondation Point de Vue des Jeunes pour Africains pour le Développement (FPJAD), Nord-Kivu
82. Forum National des Organisations Humanitaires et de Développement (FONAHD), Nord-Kivu

83. Fraternités des Prisons (FP), Nord-Kivu
84. Great Lakes Human Rights Program (GLHRP), Nord-Kivu
85. Groupe d'Actions Non Violentes Évangéliques (GANVE), Katanga
86. Groupe d'Appui aux Exploitants des Ressources Naturelles (GAERN), Kasai Oriental
87. Groupe d'Appui Conseil pour le Développement Endogène (GRACE), Nord-Kivu
88. Groupe d'Assistance aux Marginalisés (GAM), Sud-Kivu
89. Groupe d'Associations de Défenses des Droits de l'Homme et de la Paix (GADHOP), Nord-Kivu
90. Groupe Equitas (GE), Orientale
91. Groupe Lotus (GL), Orientale
92. Initiative Congolaise pour la Justice et la Paix (ICJP), Sud-Kivu
93. Initiatives ALPHA, Sud-Kivu
94. Jeunesse Unie pour les Initiatives de Développement (JUID), Nord-Kivu
95. Juristes Engagés pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme (GEDHO), Nord-Kivu
96. Justice et Transparence (JUSTRANS), Kinshasa
97. Justice Plus, Orientale
98. Ligue des Jeunes des Grands Lacs (LJGL), Nord-Kivu
99. Observatoire Congolais des Droits Humains (OCDH), Kinshasa
100. Observatoire Congolais des Prisons (OCP), Nord-Kivu
101. Observatoire de la Parité, Sud-Kivu
102. Observatoire Gouvernance et Paix (OGP), Sud-Kivu
103. Observatoire pour la Lutte contre la Corruption en Afrique Centrale (OLCAC), national
104. Organisation Congolaise des Droits de l'Homme (OCDH), Kasai Oriental
105. Organisation pour la Défense des Droits de l'Enfant (ODDE), Nord-Kivu
106. Ouvrier du Monde (ODM), Sud-Kivu
107. Paix Durable pour le Développement Social, Nord-Kivu
108. Pax-Christi, Nord-Kivu
109. Plantation de la Lubi, Kasai Oriental
110. Programme d'Appui aux Femmes et Filles en Situation Difficile (PAFSID), Kasai Oriental
111. Programme de Développement Communautaire du Nord-Kivu (PDC/NK)
112. Promotion de la Justice Réparatrice et des Initiatives de Développement Intégral (PJRIDI), Nord-Kivu
113. Promotion et Appui aux Initiatives Féminines (PAIF), Nord-Kivu
114. Protégeons la Vie Humaine (PVH), Kasai Oriental
115. Réseau des Associations de Développement pour la Réhabilitation et la Maintenance des Routes et des Recettes Agricoles (Réseau ARDA), Nord-Kivu
116. Réseau d'Initiatives Locales pour un Développement Durable (REID), Nord-Kivu
117. Réseau Femme et Développement (REFED), Kasai Oriental
118. Réseau National des Organisations des Droits de l'Homme de la République Démocratique du Congo (RENADHOC), national
119. Réseau pour la Réforme du Secteur de Sécurité (RRJSS), national
120. Réseau Provincial des Organisations de Droit de l'Homme au Congo/Nord-Kivu (REPRODHOC/NK)
121. Réseau Provincial des Organisations de Droit de l'Homme au Congo/Sud-Kivu (REPRODHOC/SK)
122. Réveil des Femmes pour le Développement Intégré (RFEDI), Nord-Kivu

123. Service For Peace (SFP), Bas-Congo
124. Solidarité Actions Sociales (SAS), Sud-Kivu
125. Solidarité des Femmes pour la Paix et le Développement Intégral (SOFEPADI), national
126. Solidarité des Volontaires pour l'Humanité (SVH), Sud-Kivu
127. Solidarité Indépendante de Défense des Droits Humains (SIDH) , Nord-Kivu
128. Solidarité Intégrale aux Personnes Démunies (SAIPED), Orientale
129. Solidarité pour la Promotion de la Paix Sociale et la Paix (SOPROP), Nord-Kivu
130. Solidarité pour le Développement Communautaire (SODEC), Kinshasa
131. Syndicat des Défenses des Intérêts Paysans (SYDIP), Nord-Kivu
132. Syndicat des Femmes Travailleuses (SYFT), Nord-Kivu
133. Synergie des Associations des Jeunes pour l'Education Civique Electorale et la Promotion des Droits Humains au Sud-Kivu (SAJECEK/Force vive)
134. Synergie des Femmes pour les Victimes de Violences Sexuelles (SFVS), Nord-Kivu
135. Synergie Vie Paix (SVP), Nord-Kivu
136. Union d'Action pour les Initiatives de Développement (UAID), Nord-Kivu
137. Union des Femmes pour la Dignité Humaine (UFDH), Kasai Oriental
138. Union des Jeunes Congolais pour le Changement (UJCC), Sud-Kivu
139. Union des Refoulés du Shaba (URS), Kasai Oriental
140. Voix des Sans Voix (VSV), national